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ABSTRACT

The samples of students' writing found in this document exemplify the criteria used to score students' written responses on the June 1994 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Representative of the full range of students' writing, the examples in the document are intended to be used as tools to assist teachers, students, and administrators in determining students' writing strengths and weaknesses. The information in the document can then be used to improve students' writing. The papers selected for the document were used as samples for training markers during the July 1994 marking session. After an introduction, sections of the document present a general commentary on the writing samples; the writing assignment; samples of students' writing at each level as well as a sample English-as-a-Second Language paper and two exceptional papers; and developmental issues. An appendix provides the scoring criteria. (RS)

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Teachers	✔
Administrators	✔
Parents	
General Public	
Others (Specify)	

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Introduction

Purpose

The samples of students' writing found in this document exemplify the criteria used to score students' written responses on the June 1994 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Representative of the full range of students' writing, these examples are intended to be used as tools to assist teachers, students and administrators in determining students' writing strengths and weaknesses. This information can then be used to improve students' writing.

Content

The Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test consisted of two parts: *Part A: Writing* and *Part B: Reading*. This document describes students' responses to the writing assignment in *Part A*, where students listened to a song while reading its lyrics. Students chose the format (story, letter, editorial, or series of diary/journal entries) that provided them with the best opportunity to demonstrate their strengths as writers.

Selection of Papers

The papers selected for this document were used as samples for training markers during the July 1994 marking session. As such, these papers generally illustrate the quality of students' writing at each of the five achievement standards described in the scoring guide.

Each sample paper in this document has been reproduced as it appeared to the markers, that is, in the student's own handwriting. Accompanying each student's response is a discussion relating the characteristics of the response to the descriptors in the scoring guide. A copy of the scoring guide is in the Appendix.

Confirming Standards

The process of confirming the standards governing the scoring of the June 1994 writing assignment began during the week of June 27, 1994, when a group of experienced Grade 9 English Language Arts teachers read a sufficiently large sample of papers to find exemplars of the full range of the marking criteria. These teachers selected papers that were illustrative of the various scoring descriptors.

The second step in confirming standards involved a day-long session for teachers who were specially selected to serve as leaders of small groups of markers. These teachers reviewed the sample papers selected in the initial stage and endorsed them as appropriate examples of the various possible scores.

Marking

Teachers were selected for marking on the recommendation of their superintendents. All markers were teaching Grade 9 English Language Arts in the same school year that the test was administered and had done so for at least two years.

During the first morning of the marking session, markers reviewed the scoring descriptors as they related to the papers selected during the confirming-standards process.

Expectations for the marking process were as follows:

- Neither the name of the student nor the name of the school appeared on the test papers.
- Markers were advised not to mark a paper if they suspected that they recognized its source. They were instructed to disregard the quality of handwriting when evaluating the papers and to return a paper unmarked if they thought the handwriting would influence their judgement.

- When the writer had not completed the final draft, markers referred to the planning and drafting pages to add to their understanding of the writer's intent.
- No marks were placed on the students' writing during the marking process.
- Papers were read by one marker, although a random sample of papers was read a second time to establish inter-rater reliability.
- A reliability review process was undertaken every morning and afternoon, further ensuring marker reliability. All markers read and scored example papers that had previously been scored by teachers participating in the confirming-standards process. In small groups, markers compared the scores they had assigned with the previously assigned score and discussed the scores in relation to the standards in each reporting category.
- The range of the quality of students' writing was as follows: (5) Meets the Standard of Excellence, (4) Approaches the Standard of Excellence, (3) Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard, (2) Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard, and (1) Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard.
- Each paper was assessed on this five-point scale for specific qualities within five reporting categories: **Content**, **Organization**, **Sentence Structure**, **Vocabulary**, and **Conventions**. The marks for **Content** and **Organization** were then multiplied by two, doubling their weight in relation to the other categories.

Cautions

When reading this document or using it for instructional purposes, the following cautions should be kept in mind:

1. These sample papers reflect an interpretation of the standards established by teachers for the July 1994 marking session. The interpretation of the standards and the judgements made by the markers at that time may vary with other writing assignments and with writing completed under different circumstances. Therefore, these samples should be viewed as possible approaches to completing the 1994 writing assignment, rather than as *models* of writing for instructional purposes.
2. Readers should consider each student's accomplishments in light of the constraints of test writing. Under test-writing conditions, students produce writing that must be considered as first draft. When students write under conditions that encourage discussion, conferring, review, and reflection, their writing may differ substantially from that which is illustrated in this document.

General Commentary

When the entire range of papers produced on the June 1994 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test is viewed, several observations may be made about how Grade 9 students managed the assigned writing task. The papers provide information about approaches students take to planning and drafting their writing and about their development as writers. The following discussion is offered to teachers concerned with these issues and with their implications.

Given the greater number of students who took the test this year and the slight increase in the writing standards, the performance of students who wrote Part A of the Grade 9 English Language Arts test in 1994 is encouraging. Teachers who marked the tests were very pleased with most of the papers, as the overall quality of the writing in Language Arts in 1994 is better than that done in 1990. Teachers observed students' strengths in the following areas: content, organization, and especially vocabulary. The markers agreed that students, for the most part, showed genuine confidence in

their writing and hence were willing to take the risks that resulted in a better product.

A small number of students wrote papers that were technically superior. These papers showed the students' masterly use of language, as well as an ability to draw on knowledge of global issues that related to the writing prompt. The quality of these papers far exceeded the expectations for students in a Grade 9 classroom.

In testing situations such as this one, students must draw on their knowledge and experience in order to respond to the assigned task. The range and extent of students' experiences are evident in their imaginative and thoughtful responses to the writing assignment. Students created contexts that reflected personal life experiences, as well as encounters with text and with the media.

In the classroom, teachers can help students by confirming that students' own experiences, interests, and observations are valuable and are the best foundations on which to build their writing. Teachers can also help students by building a background for writing about less familiar topics and by assisting students in focusing their writing.

The Writing Assignment

Grade 9 Achievement Test

English Language Arts

Part A: Writing

To the Teacher

Please read the information on this page to the students.

Description

- In this test, you are asked to listen to a song while you read the lyrics. This song and the headlines that border it may provide ideas to help you complete the **Writing Assignment**.
- You have two hours to complete the assignment.

Instructions

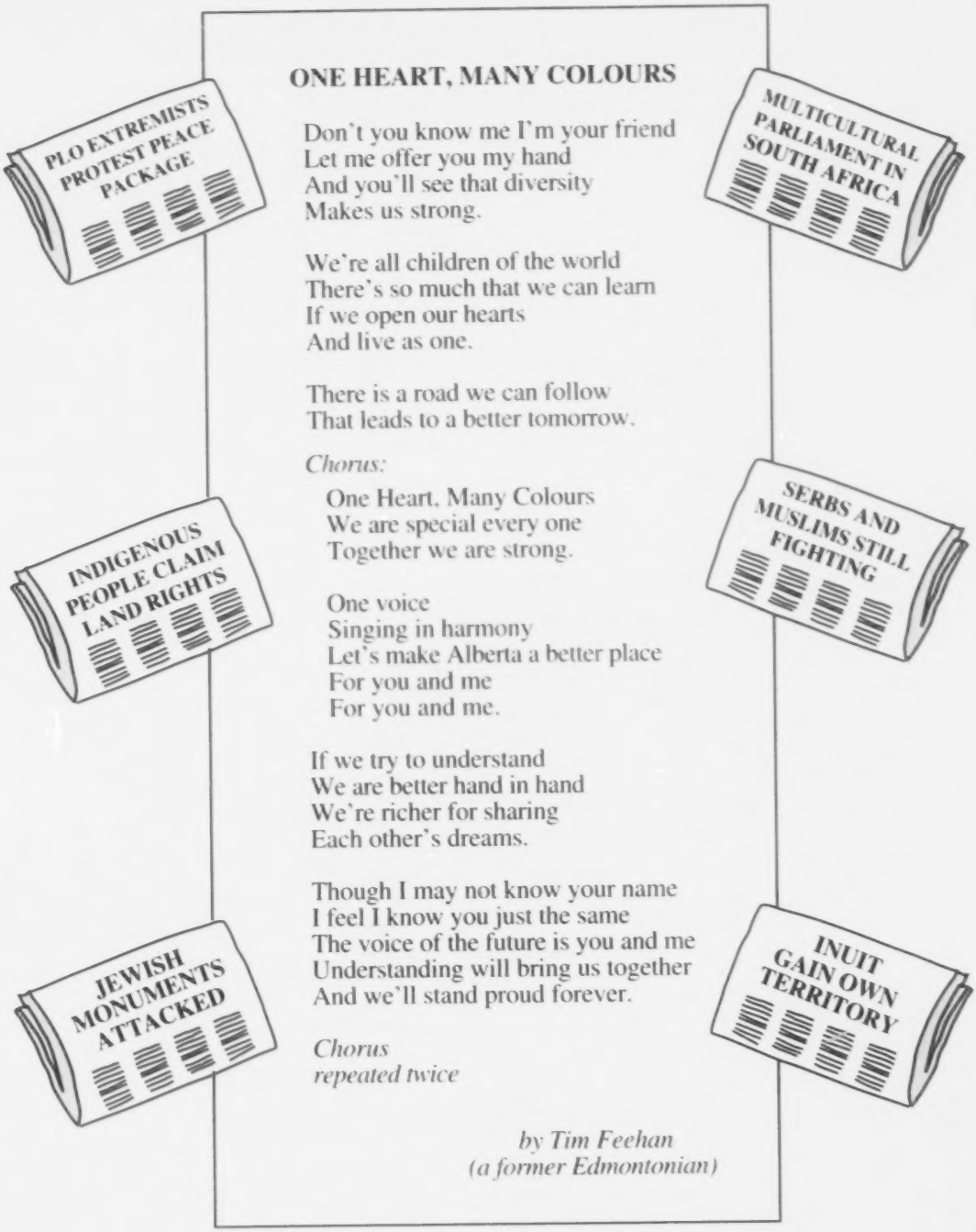
- You may use a non-electronic English language dictionary and a thesaurus.
- Write your ideas on the pages labelled ***Planning and Drafting***.
- Write your revised work in **blue** or **black ink** on the pages labelled ***Revised Work***.
- Remember that you may make changes and corrections to your revised work.

Evaluation

- Your writing will be evaluated on ***what*** you say and ***how well*** you say it (on **Content**, **Organization**, **Sentence Structure**, **Vocabulary**, and **Conventions**).

June 1994

Written Response to Literature

Read the following lyrics as you listen to the song and complete the writing assignment that follows.

PLO EXTREMISTS PROTEST PEACE PACKAGE
MULTICULTURAL PARLIAMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE CLAIM LAND RIGHTS
SERBS AND MUSLIMS STILL FIGHTING
JEWISH MONUMENTS ATTACKED
INUIT GAIN OWN TERRITORY

ONE HEART, MANY COLOURS

Don't you know me I'm your friend
Let me offer you my hand
And you'll see that diversity
Makes us strong.

We're all children of the world
There's so much that we can learn
If we open our hearts
And live as one.

There is a road we can follow
That leads to a better tomorrow.

Chorus:

One Heart, Many Colours
We are special every one
Together we are strong.

One voice
Singing in harmony
Let's make Alberta a better place
For you and me
For you and me.

If we try to understand
We are better hand in hand
We're richer for sharing
Each other's dreams.

Though I may not know your name
I feel I know you just the same
The voice of the future is you and me
Understanding will bring us together
And we'll stand proud forever.

Chorus
repeated twice

by Tim Feehan
(a former Edmontonian)

Writing Assignment

> *Write about some of the things you or society could do to "bring us together" and lead us "to a better tomorrow."*

Your response should be in the form of a story, letter, editorial, or series of diary/journal entries.

You may draw from:

- the song you have just heard
- the headlines bordering the lyrics of the song
- other materials you have read
- your personal experiences
- television programs you have seen
- other songs you have heard
- class discussions you have had

When writing, be sure to:

- **consider** your audience
- **focus** on your purpose
- **organize** your thoughts appropriately in sentences and paragraphs
- **budget** your time
- **proofread** and **correct** your revised work

Samples of Students' Writing

Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard (1)

Student Sample A

This paper is frustrating for readers because it provides a small number of general ideas that appear to be unrelated to each other and that do not develop the writer's purpose.

Content

Knowing the purpose of the assignment and reading the opening sentence, it appears that the writer intends to explain a hatred for wars and to advocate a peaceful world. However, the purpose is not sustained, as the writer goes on to describe, in superficial terms, what happens in wars and then lists wars his parents have talked about. For example, sentences such as "you can't do nothing about it" convey very little information to develop the writer's argument.

Though the writer lists some general information about wars, the details are inappropriate for a paper that is supposed to talk about a better tomorrow.

The writer's reference to wars about which he/she has some knowledge does not fit with the ideas previously stated.

Organization

Though the introduction clearly identifies the writer's stance on wars, it does not provide a focus for the paper.

The haphazard listing of information appears to be a description of a war scene in a movie, rather than an organized presentation of ideas to support the writer's argument.

There is no transition between the description of what happens in wars and the writer's listing of familiar wars. As a result, the ending is unrelated to the rest of the paper and there is no closure.

Sentence Structure

Though the ideas are presented as a list, the writer has attempted to write in sentences. Showing little control of sentence structure, the writer combines all of the details related to the idea of a hatred of wars into one run-on sentence.

There is no deliberate variation of sentence type or length, as the ideas related to the writer's familiarity with wars are combined in a similar manner.

Because the writer gathers details related to an idea into one sentence, this paper is confusing to read.

Vocabulary

The writer's use of general vocabulary about wars (e.g., "gun's," "bubes") does not provide much information for readers.

Though the writer expresses a point of view and reveals a lack of knowledge about wars, it is difficult to get a sense of the writer's voice because of the general and superficial language that is used.

Conventions

Spelling errors are present throughout the paper. Familiar words, such as "screaming," are spelled as they are pronounced. Other words are difficult to read because they are missing letters or have unusual spellings. For example, "Vietnam" is spelled "vaicam" and can only be read using the context of the sentence. In addition, plural nouns are spelled with apostrophes.

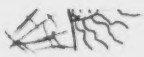
Spoken language is not punctuated correctly and periods are used only at the end of run-on sentences.

Planning and Drafting

The writer's plan is unrelated to the paper that was submitted as revised work. It focuses on stopping crime, while the revised paper focuses on wars.

As in the revised paper, the final sentence in the plan is unrelated to the rest of the writing.

The writer appears to have written another paper, rather than using the planning pages to generate and organize ideas for the revised paper.



Planning and Drafting

- I see that if you stare at some one ~~you~~ get the cerep out of you.

what I have sall sen's I was little was war's and curim, killing's. I wish I could change all of these ~~stuff~~ thing's and how would I change these's thing's will I would beld more Jial's and if ~~enyone~~ any person were to brak The rule's and what kid of enverment would I live in will I would live back ~~in~~ in the 50 and 60

what I have said sins I was little was wars and sein, killing's. I wish I could change all of these things.

And how ~~can~~ would I change these things will I would hold more ~~jails~~ jails and if any person were to break the rules.

And what kid of enveriment would I live in will I would live back in the 50's 60.

I hate wars because all you here is gun's and bubes and people dieing home's are getting werked and people are roning around screming ~~a~~ help helps and you cant do nothing about it.

I did not no ~~at~~ anything about it and tell my mom and dad told me about it like world war #1 & #2 then Vaican

Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard (2)

Student Sample B

This paper does not hold readers' interest because it presents a number of generally worded opinions and observations and does not show clearly the relationships between them.

Content

The purpose is difficult to discern because the writer refers to a number of issues related to conflicts among people. While the writer presents strong opinions about gang-fighting, name-calling, and being excluded, these problems are addressed in a superficial way, as there are few details to develop the ideas.

Organization

The introduction sets up the expectation that the journal entries will address ways in which fighting can be stopped. However, because the journal entries present conflicts and do not mention solutions to the conflicts, the purpose is not sustained.

Though the ideas that are presented could be related to a focus on stopping fighting, the writer has not used transitions between ideas within the journal entries, nor between the three journal entries. As a result, the ideas do not flow smoothly and the paper is confusing for readers.

Rather than providing closure to the paper, the final sentence in this paper adds a new example of a conflict.

Sentence Structure

The writer occasionally uses awkward sentence constructions, as shown in the following example: "I was reading about Racism and other countries also our country."

There is little variety in sentence structure, as the words seem to tumble onto the page as they would in spoken conversation. As a result, it does not appear that the writer has made deliberate use of sentence structures to achieve an effect.

Vocabulary

The writer uses general words and expressions throughout the paper. For example, when referring to racial behaviour, the writer uses the expression "People who do that kind of stuff."

Clichés are misused and do not enhance the ideas that are expressed (e.g., "they will fight till there hearts content"). In addition, the word "discrimonated" is used appropriately in terms of its meaning, yet the sentence in which it is used is not correctly constructed.

Though the writer presents opinions on some of the ideas, the opinions are expressed in general language that hides the writer's voice (e.g., "I don't think it's cool"). Readers expect to gain an understanding of the writer's thoughts and feelings when reading journal entries, yet it is only in the final journal entry that the writer's voice is heard very clearly, as a sense of loneliness is communicated.

Conventions

Because commonly used words predominate, most words are spelled correctly. However, in a number of sentences, the writer's choice of words is awkward (e.g., "loose" for "lose"), and there is confusion in the use of pronouns (e.g., "there selves").

Capital letters appear indiscriminately throughout the paper, though they are used correctly at the beginning of sentences and for the word "I."

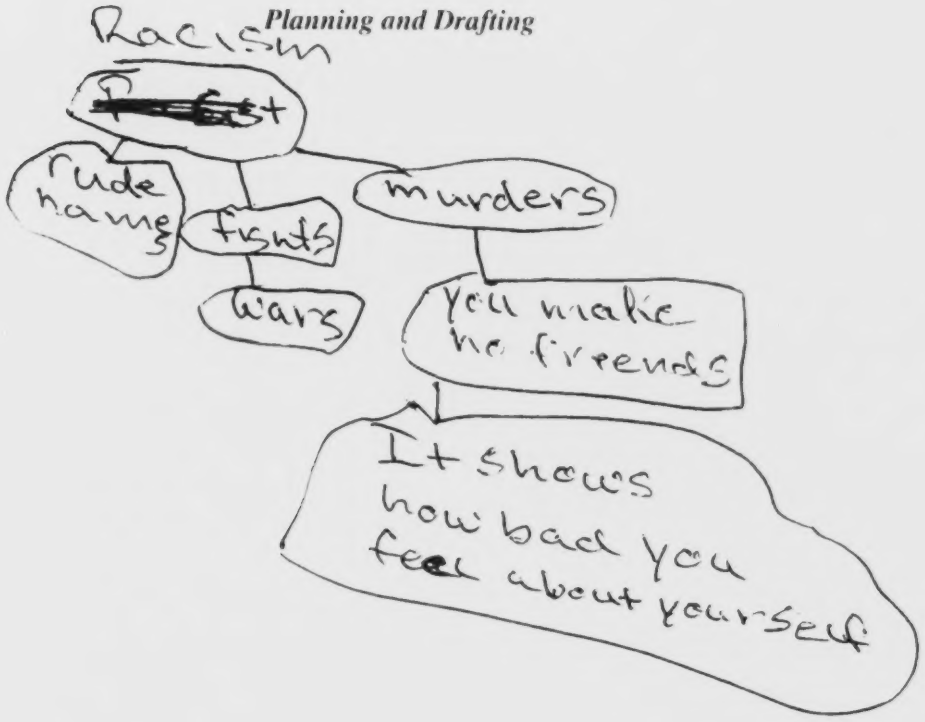
Because the sentences are awkwardly constructed, there are also errors in punctuation (e.g., "People Do these things as if they are fun to do as if it is cool").

Planning and Drafting

The writer planned each journal entry separately using three webs. The connections between the webs are not evident, nor are the relationships between the items in each web apparent. As a result, the webs do not assist the writer in organizing ideas and making connections between them.

The writer uses the ideas from the webs in the first two journal entries, but does not finish the third entry.

Planning and Drafting


Racism
[redacted]
rude names
fights
wars
murders
you make no friends
It shows how bad you feel about yourself

Journal Entry #1

I just heard a song which was about getting along and being friends. I think that if we stopped fighting over everything everyone would be happier.
I also think that if kids stop [redacted] getting into gangs the wouldn't Be in as much trouble.
I Think ~~that~~ that [redacted] the trouble with gangs is that they Don't ever stop, they will fight till there hearts content.

Racism **Revised Work**

~~Racism~~ Journal entry #2

I was reading about Racism and Other countries also our country. I ~~wo~~read that People are calling other coloured People ~~rude~~ names. People Do these things as if they are fun to do as if it is cool. I don't think it's cool Personaly I think that People who are doing that makes them ~~fe~~ Look tough. But it Doesn't it just makes Them Look Like fools and it Shows how ~~Bad~~ bad the feel about there selves. People who Do That Kind of Stuff Loose friends and get into fights or get themselves murdered. This is also how wars and gang fights get started is with Racist ~~Pe~~ People.

Revised Work

Discrimonation Journal entry # 3

~~Discrimination~~ ~~Journal entry~~

I have been discrimenated from Groups, activities, and in games I am last pick or upto bat last for Bas Ball.

Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard (3)

Student Sample C

This paper generally holds readers' interest, as the description of the writer's personal attempt to make the world a better place is unique and interesting. However, the experience is described using general language, with a few ideas being repeated numerous times.

Content

The purpose is generally maintained, as readers expect to hear how the world can become a "better place," and the writer describes a personal attempt, as well as hopes for the future, in achieving this goal.

While the writer describes a unique way in which she helped others, the idea of helping others is repeated throughout the paper. In addition, supporting details are repeated and/or stated in general terms, as shown in the following example: "we took all the money we made and donated it to the hospital . . . to try to help out all the people at the hospital. We did many little things like that all the time."

Organization

The introduction is functional, establishing the purpose and the writer's stance: "The world will probably never be perfect, but everyone can help make it a better place." The purpose is generally maintained, though relationships between ideas are not always clear because transitions are missing.

The arrangement of events is easy to follow, as a description of past actions flows into a sharing of the writer's hopes for the future. As a result, this paper scores in the high end of the 3 category for organization.

The ending ties the ideas together in a rather mechanical manner, as the writer's stance from the opening paragraph is repeated.

Sentence Structure

The writer shows a basic sense of sentence structure. Some sentences ramble, but the meaning is not impeded because they are usually formed by having two complete sentences separated by a comma. However, the occasional awkwardly constructed sentence is somewhat confusing to read, as shown in the following example: "I hope to be a bigger success in helping, and help out bigger issues."

There is a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Vocabulary

General words and expressions, such as "be nice to everyone" and "whole bunch of dance routines," are used appropriately and do communicate the writer's purpose, though specific words and expressions would have been more effective.

The writer's voice is uneven, as it is heard in the description of a personal attempt to make the world a better place and in the expression of the writer's thoughts. However, it is hidden behind the general language that is used throughout the paper.

Conventions

Because the writer uses familiar words, there are few spelling errors and the communication of the writer's ideas is not impeded. The writer confuses homonyms, such as "our" and "are," and spells "a lot" as one word.

The unconventional grammar is sometimes confusing. For example, the information in the following sentence could be combined in different ways to clarify who is carrying out which actions: "we then told everyone we knew that we were having a dance show and to watch it." In addition, the awkward and rambling sentence constructions lead to problems in the

use of commas to separate ideas (e.g., "Now that I am older I don't do things like dance shows anymore, but I do, do other things to help the world").

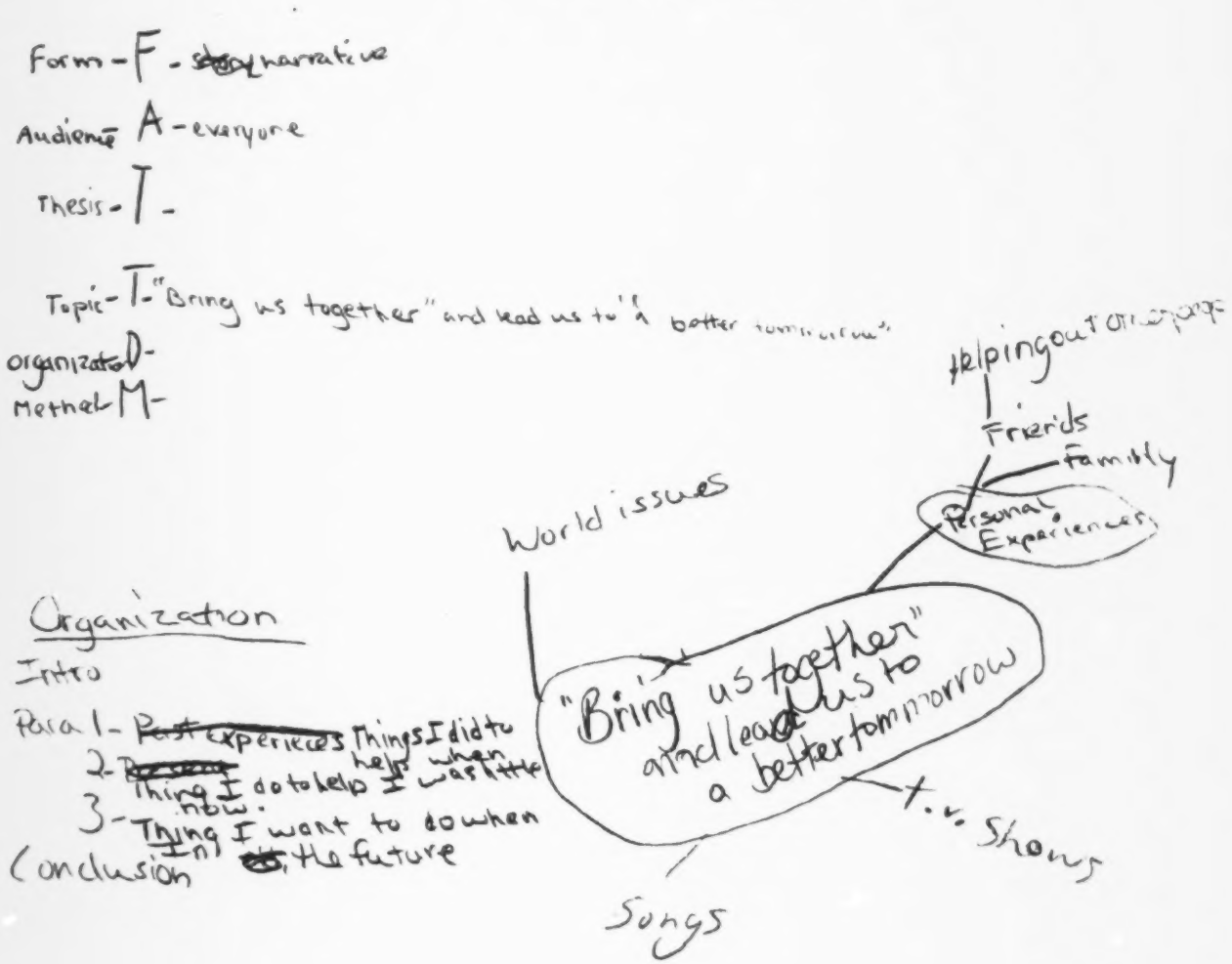
Planning and Drafting

To provide direction and a focus for the paper, the writer has used the FAT TOM strategy. In addition, the writer used a web to generate ideas that related to the topic and lent themselves to a narrative form.

The writer's extensive planning efforts helped to organize the paper in a time sequence, moving from the past to the present and looking forward to the future.

When revising the first draft, the writer changed general words and expressions, such as "that" to "dance shows," in an effort to clarify meanings. The writer also edited the first draft by attending to writing conventions. These changes were incorporated into the revised copy.

Planning and Drafting


Form - F - narrative
Audience A - everyone
Thesis - T -
Topic - T - "Bring us together" and lead us to a better tomorrow
organization O -
Method M -
helping out in my community
Friends
Family
Personal Experiences
World issues
"Bring us together" and lead us to a better tomorrow
T.V. Shows
Songs
Organization
Intro
Para 1 - Past experiences Things I did to help when I was little
2 - Present thing I do to help now.
3 - Thing I want to do when I'm in the future
Conclusion

Rough Copy

Planning and Drafting

.Leading Us to a Better Tommorrow

The ~~door~~ world we live in today is not perfect. ~~It will probably never be perfect.~~ The world will probably never be perfect, ~~No one can make the world perfect~~, but everyone can help make it a better place. I myself have tried to make the world a better place by doing things that ~~will~~ has helped bring us together and lead us to a ~~better~~ tomorrow.

When I was only a little girl my best friend and I wanted to help people all the time. ~~One day I remember~~ I once remember we made up a whole bunch of dance routines that we practiced for days, we then told everyone we knew about it to come watch the dance show we were having. ~~for them~~. We charged people to watch are show and when the ~~event~~ was over all the money we had we donated to hospital of the town we lived in to try to help out all the people at the hospital. We did many other little things like that all the time.

Now that I am older I don't do things like dance shows anymore, but I do, do other things to help the world ~~make the world a better place~~. All people have to do is be nice to everyone and make peace not war with people and that is helping out. Not only I, but all the friends I have are nice to everybody trying to make the world a better place. Whenever I have extra change in stores I will donate it.

When I grow old in the future I still ~~[illegible]~~ want to continue on helping the world in every way I can. I hope to be a bigger success in helping, and help out bigger issues. I hope to have a lot of money and help out people less fortunate.

I know the things I have done in my life ~~in the past, present and hopefully the future~~ is not a lot, but if everyone ~~[illegible]~~ helps out a little bit in this world it is bringing us, as people closer together which is leading us to a better tommorrow. If everyone in the world does do their part by helping the maybe someday the world will be perfect.

Leading Us to a Better Tomorrow

The world we live in today is not perfect. The world will probably never be perfect, but everyone can help make it a better place. I myself have tried to make the world a better place by doing things that have helped bring us together and lead us to a better tomorrow.

When I was only a little girl my best friend and I wanted to help people all the time. I once remember we made up a whole bunch of dance routines that we practiced for days, we then told everyone we knew that we were having a dance show and to watch it. We charged people to watch are show and when it was done we took all the money we made and donated it to the hospital of the town we lived in to try to help out all the

people at the hospital. We did many little things like that all the time.

Now that I am older I don't do things like ~~dance show~~ anymore, but I do, do other things to help the world All people have to do is be nice to everyone and make peace not war with people and that is helping out. Not only I, but all the friends I have are nice to everyone trying to make this world a better place. Also whenever I have extra change in store I will donate it.

When I grow old in the future I still want to continue on helping the world in everyway I can. I hope to be a bigger success in helping, and help out bigger issues. I hope to have lots of money and help out people less fortunate.

I know the things I have done in my life are not alot, but if everyone helps out a little bit in this world it is bringing us, as people closer together which is leading us to a better tomorrow. If everyone in the world does there part by helping, then maybe someday the world will be perfect.

Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard (3)

Student Sample D

Though conventional, the ideas in this paper flow smoothly and are clearly related to the purpose. As a result, the paper generally holds readers' interest.

Content

The writer's stance is established in the opening paragraph and the ideas that follow relate to the writer's position that "society can still be saved if we act now."

As is the case with many papers that scored a 3 for content, this paper presents a series of actions that could lead society to a "better tomorrow." The writer provides a few generally worded details to support each new idea and then moves on to the next idea. Thus, though the details are relevant, they do not develop the main ideas to a great extent.

Organization

The opening paragraph rambles somewhat, as the writer defines a society. However, it goes on to establish the purpose of the paper. The ideas presented in the paper relate to the purpose, as they describe ways in which "society can still be saved if we act now."

Because the ideas are presented in a list-like manner, their order does not influence the clarity of communication. The writer uses transitional statements that are associated with lists to connect each new idea to the paper's purpose. For example, to introduce the first idea, the writer explains, "I feel the first step we have to take is to stop violence."

The ending restates the writer's stance in a mechanical manner, as the writer asserts, "In conclusion I think we should take up the task of improving our society."

Sentence Structure

There is little variety in sentence type and length, as simple sentences are used throughout the paper. The writer shows a basic sense of sentence structure, though there are a few sentences that are awkwardly constructed and interfere with the communication of ideas (e.g., "But right now our society is being destroyed if it already isn't").

Vocabulary

Though general words and expressions predominate, the writer's choice of language is appropriate for a discussion of society's problems. For example, in the sentence "It's hard to believe that some people are still racist out there," the writer communicates a message, but the effectiveness of the communication is limited because readers do not have enough information about the context to which the writer is referring.

The writer's voice is masked, for the most part, behind the general language that is used. However, the strongly worded assertions, such as "Our society has to understand that fighting doesn't solve anything," give readers a sense of the writer's emotional stance on the ideas presented.

Conventions

The clarity of communication is not affected by the few spelling errors in this paper. Most of the errors result from a combining of two words (e.g., "eachother") or from confusion over the use of apostrophes (e.g., "lets").

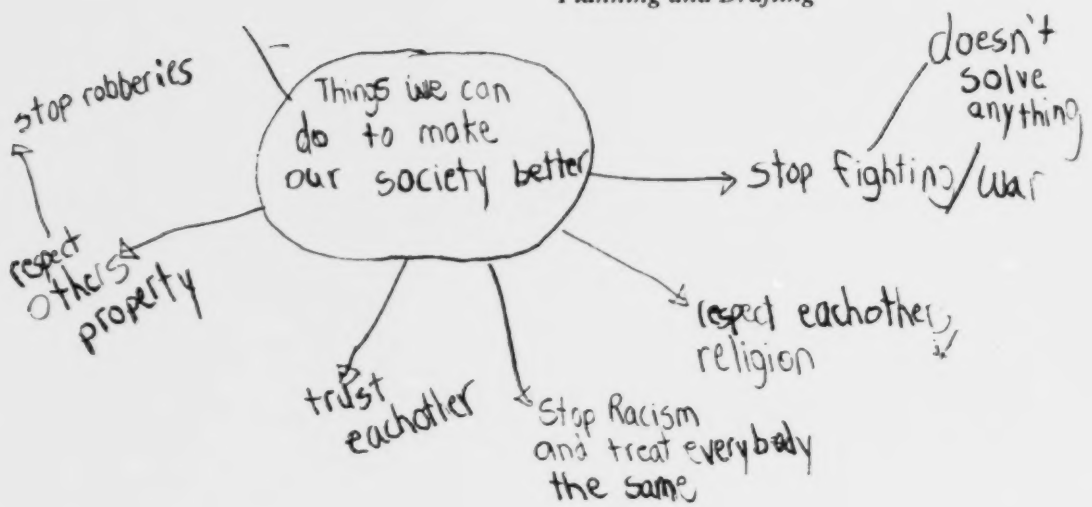
Punctuation and grammar are essentially correct, so there is little confusion in following the flow of ideas.

Planning and Drafting

There is a direct relationship between the writer's plans and the revised writing. The writer used a web to generate ideas about "things we can do to make our society better." These ideas are presented in the paper with a few supporting details for each one.

By looking at both the writer's first draft and the revised copy, it is evident that the writer was attempting to enhance the clarity of communication at each stage in the writing process. The writer has added, changed, and deleted words and expressions found in the first draft in order to communicate the purpose more effectively in the revised copy.

Planning and Drafting



What is society? I feel it is a group of persons joined together. It's the people of any particular time or place. ~~Soci~~ ~~Supposed is be~~ It's where people help and learn from eachother. But right now are society is being destroyed if it already isn't. People have began to give up on ~~our society~~ it. I think are society can still be saved. ~~These~~ ~~If~~ if we act now.

I feel the first thing we ~~should~~ have to do is stop violence These days, whenever I pick up a newspaper or turn on the TV. ~~Je~~ ~~just~~ ~~Televisio~~ I see and hear has to do with all the violence going on in this world. ~~Whether~~ Either it's war between two countries that used to be Allies, ~~or~~ or it's murder. Our society has to understand that fighting doesn't solve ~~fg~~ anything.

Another thing I think we should do to make society a better place to live in is treat all people equally. It's hard to believe that people are still racist out there. The colour of your skin ~~or~~ or your religion or ~~your beliefs~~ shouldn't matter in a society like o

There is additional space for Planning and Drafting on pages 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

society - a group of persons joined together, all the people, the people of any particular time or place, their activities & customs

community/ alliance

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~~We should respect others religions. and In fact we~~

Also, ~~to In order to improve our society~~ ~~should~~ must ~~it~~ leave other's peoples property alone. Everyday I hear about sobaebody's property being vandilized or stolen. The main reason I feel this happens is because of how greedy all the people in our society have become. They must realize that money and power ~~isn't~~ aren't ~~anything~~ everything.

Lastly, I think people should learn to trust eachother. I mean people are actually scared of eachother these days. Trust has surely diminished in our society. ~~For instance~~, People our afraid to ~~go For a walk~~ out ~~after~~ ~~the~~ ~~it~~ in the late evening. ~~I be this~~ they are afraid ~~this~~ ~~murdered~~.

In conclusion I think we should take up the task ~~for~~ of improving our society. It'll be worth it at the end. Let's come together and lead ourselves to a better tommorow!

What is society? I feel it is a group of people joined together. It's the people of any particular time or place. It's ~~were~~ where people help and ~~learn~~ learn from eachother. But right now our society is being destroyed if it already isn't. People have begun to give up on it. I think our society can still be saved if we act now.

I feel the first step we have to take is to stop violence. These days, whenever I pick up a news paper or turn on the T.V., everything I see and hear has to do with all the violence going on in this world. Either it's war between two countries that used to be allies or it's murder. Our society has to understand that fighting doesn't solve anything.

Another thing I think we should do ~~is~~ to make our community a better place to live in is to treat eachother equally. It's hard to believe that some people are still racist out there. The colour of your skin or your religion shouldn't matter in a society like ours.

Also inorder to improve our alliance we must leave other people's property alone. ~~Everybody~~ Everyday I hear about somebody's property being stolen or vandalized. The ~~m~~ main reason I think this happens is because of how greedy most of the people in our society are becoming. They must realize that money and power aren't everything.

~~Lastly~~ Lastly, I think people should learn to trust eachother. I mean people are actually scared of eachother these days. Trust has surely diminished in our society.

In conclusion I think we should take up the task of improving our society. It'll be worth it at the end. Lets come together and lead "ourselves to a better tommorow".

Approaches the Standard of Excellence (4)

Student Sample E

This narrative presents a thoughtful and sensitive view of the inner conflict experienced by an individual who observes acts of racism in the life of a schoolmate. As a result, the paper engages and holds readers' interest.

Content

The responses of the narrator and the other students to Marie's boarding of the school bus establish a clear focus for the story. The subsequent events develop the conflict between going along with the group and asserting individual values and perspectives.

The writer presents specific events that clearly illustrate discrimination against Marie, together with the narrator's struggle to find the courage to act according to her beliefs.

Through telling the story from one character's point of view, the writer provides thoughtful views on racism. In addition, Jennifer's actions illustrate a manageable, yet courageous way in which individuals can create a better tomorrow.

Organization

The writer skillfully creates suspense by introducing the story with the sentence, "It started off as a normal day." The introduction also provides information about the characters and the conflict in the story.

The events and ideas flow smoothly and purposefully, as readers become aware of the increasing tension experienced by Jennifer through her responses to daily observations of and interactions with Marie and other schoolmates.

Jennifer's decision to stand up for Marie, acting in accordance with her beliefs, brings closure to the story, as she resolves her inner conflict.

Sentence Structure

Sentence structure is controlled, as the writer uses a variety of sentence types and lengths to effectively communicate the theme of the story. For example, while Jennifer makes a critical decision about her responses to racial acts, the trivialities of everyday life interfere. The writer effectively shows this contrast with the simple sentence, "Then the bell rang" following the more complex sentences: "I started to head over to her, but Sheri grabbed me and pulled me into the other direction. That is when I promised myself that I was going to make friends with Marie."

Ideas are combined skillfully into complex and compound sentences so that the events flow into each other smoothly (e.g., "Just as she said that, Mrs. Green walked into the room and we all rushed to our seats. I went to sit down feeling proud of myself").

Vocabulary

Colourful images are created through the writer's choice of specific words and expressions, such as "Harry's beat up, old school bus," "inseparable," "being cornered," and "reek of curry."

The writer's voice is clearly heard through Jennifer's specifically described thoughts and actions. However, in some places, the dialogue seems somewhat forced and unnatural, as the writer does not use contractions (e.g., "Let us go").

Conventions

Few errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are evident in this narrative. For the most part, the writer correctly spells the less familiar words and correctly punctuates the complex sentences that are used.

Planning and Drafting

The writer planned the narrative by listing events and characters, crossing out those events that did fit with the message that the story was intended to convey.

The revisions made to the first draft show that the writer attempted to clarify meanings by using more specific words, such as "noticed," in place of general words, such as "saw." In addition, the writer edited the first draft by playing with different spellings of words that did not look right, by changing the punctuation, and by combining ideas into more complex sentences. It was in the revisions that the writer changed the dialogue to a less natural form by getting rid of contractions.

Planning and Drafting

Mission Accomplished

- a girl at school who nobody likes
- takes our yellow school bus
- smells like curry, wears dirty clothes
- people make fun of her
- I felt sorry for her
- invited her to my house
- I got to know her better
- ~~she told me of her problems~~
- ~~poor~~
- ~~has to work~~
- finally my friends decide to accept her
- brought everyone together
- makes the world a better place

It started off as a normal day. As usual, we were riding in Harry's beat up, ~~old~~ stuffy old school bus, and I was sitting beside my best friend, Sheri. We had known each other for the longest time and were inseparable. Everyone on the bus shifted forward as the bus came to its last stop before arriving at the school.

Sheri leaned over and whispered to me, "Oh, here comes Marie. I hope she doesn't sit in front of us!"

The bus was silent. You could see the relief in their eyes as Marie passed them, for it meant that they would not have to sit with her. Finally, she chose the empty seat right in front of us.

"Oh great! Now my hair is going to reek of curry for the whole day!" Sheri said cruelly.

Inside, I felt sorry for Marie. Everyone at school was always making fun of her because she ~~smelled~~ smelt like curry, and dresses in shabby clothes. You can always hear them whispering, "Curry Marie!" and at lunch, she would just go to a corner and sit all by herself.

"all right!" she cried out in amazement.

Just as she said that, Mrs. Green walked in the room and we all rushed to our seats. I went to sit down feeling ~~a sense of pride~~ proud of myself.

After another boring day of school, I rushed out to find Marie. As I got outside, I saw her being cornered by a group of girls. They were all chanting,

"Curry Marie! Curry Marie!"

I rushed over, and yelled for them to stop. Everyone turned around to see me, and stared in amazement!

"Leave her alone. She has done nothing to you!" I cried.

Then I heard another familiar voice, "Jennifer is right! Leave her alone!" It was Sheri! I ~~just~~ looked over and gave her a little smile.

Suddenly, one of the girls said, "Let's go. We are ~~just~~ wasting our time here." And they ~~all just~~ walked away.

That day, I walked off feeling a sense of accomplishment. For, not only did I stand up for what is right, but I gained a new friend as well, and together, the three of us walked away ~~happily~~ joyfully.

Mission Accomplished

It started off as a normal day. As usual, we were riding in Harry's beat up, old school bus, and I was sitting beside my best friend, Sheri. We had known each other for the longest time and were inseparable.

Everyone on the bus shifted forward as the bus came to its last stop before arriving at the school.

Sheri leaned over and whispered to me, "Oh, + here comes Mark. I

hope that she does not sit in front of us!""

The bus was silent. You could see the relief in their eyes as Marie passed them, for it meant that they would not have to sit with her. Finally, she chose the empty seat right in front of me.

"Oh great! Now my hair is going to reek of curry for the whole day!" they could scream.

Inside, I felt sorry for Marie because at least I was always making fun of her behind her mind. Secretly,

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and dressed in shabby clothes. You can always hear them whispering, "Curry Marie!" And at lunch, she would just go to a corner and sit all by herself.

Finally, we reached the school and everyone rushed off of the bus into their own separate directions. As I got off the bus with Sheri, I saw Marie standing under the giant oak tree all by herself.

I started to head over to her, but Sheri grabbed me and pulled me into

the other direction. That is when I promised myself that I was going to make friends with Marie. Then the bell rang. Sheri and I said our good-byes and went to class.

I had Biology first thing. As I walked into the classroom, I noticed Marie, and I said to myself.

"Now this is the perfect chance to get to know her better!"

I walked over to her and introduced myself.

"Hi Marie. I am Jennifer and I was wondering if you wanted to come over to my house afterschool?"

"You want me to come over to your house?" she said curiously. I could still see the shock in her eyes. "But why?"

"I just thought, that maybe we could get to know each other better."

"All right!" she cried out in amazement.

Just as she said that, Mrs. Green walked ~~in~~ into the room and we all rushed to our seats. I went to sit down

feeling proud of myself.

After another boring day of school, I rushed out to find Marie. As I got outside, I saw her being cornered by a group of girls. They were all chanting, "Curry Marie! Curry Marie!"

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"Juniper is right! Leave her alone!"

It was Sheri! I looked over and gave her a little smile.

Suddenly, one of the girls said, "Let us go. We are just wasting our time here." And they all walked away.

That day, I walked off feeling a sense of accomplishment. For, not only did I stand up for what is right, but I gained a new friend as well, and together, the three of us walked away cheerfully.

Approaches the Standard of Excellence (4)

Student Sample F

The creative way in which various points of view are presented in this paper engages and holds readers' interest.

Content

The purpose of the paper is clearly presented in the opening paragraph, as the reporter states her/his views about taking action to solve problems. The purpose is sustained by the quoted contributions to the newspaper article, which reinforce the reporter's views.

Many of the ideas about solving world problems are thoughtfully developed with specific examples, as speakers, such as the fourteen year old and the college professor, refer to events in their lives. Other ideas are relevant, though more general, as is shown in the contribution from the woman from Medicine Hat.

Organization

The unique context for this paper provides an effective organizational structure for presenting a series of world problems and connecting them to the theme of taking action. Because this organizational framework is used, the order of the ideas does not influence the clarity of communication.

Transitions are appropriate for the newspaper format established by the writer. The ending is related to the focus, as it emphasizes the similarities among the contributors' viewpoints. The writer's comments on the actions of politicians in response to the expressed views is related, though it appears to introduce another issue, rather than tying together the issues presented in the paper.

Sentence Structure

For the most part, the writer shows control over sentence structure, effectively using a variety of sentence lengths and types. Some sentences are combined in an awkward manner. However, because these sentences are taken from interviews, they are consistent with the ways in which oral sentences are constructed and do not interfere with the communication of ideas (e.g., "If all they have to do is two years, why not do the crime again, they can handle two more").

Vocabulary

The language used in this paper is consistent with the more general vocabulary used by those who are interviewed by reporters. Some specific words and expressions, such as "intimidating" and "frustrates" are used to communicate ideas more clearly.

The paddling metaphor chosen by the writer effectively illustrates the idea of "heading in the same direction."

Though all of the contributors speak with the same voice, which is unlikely since the contributors are both students and professors, the writer's voice is clearly heard in the specific observations of society's ills and in the personal responses to these problems.

Conventions

The few spelling errors that are found in this paper, such as "alot" and "tommorrow," do not reduce the clarity of the communication.

Because ideas are expressed using the sentence structure of spoken language, the grammar and punctuation of some sentences is somewhat unconventional. However, as shown in the following sentence, the communication of ideas is not impeded: "As for my opinion, the way I see it is, the politicians may promise us a better

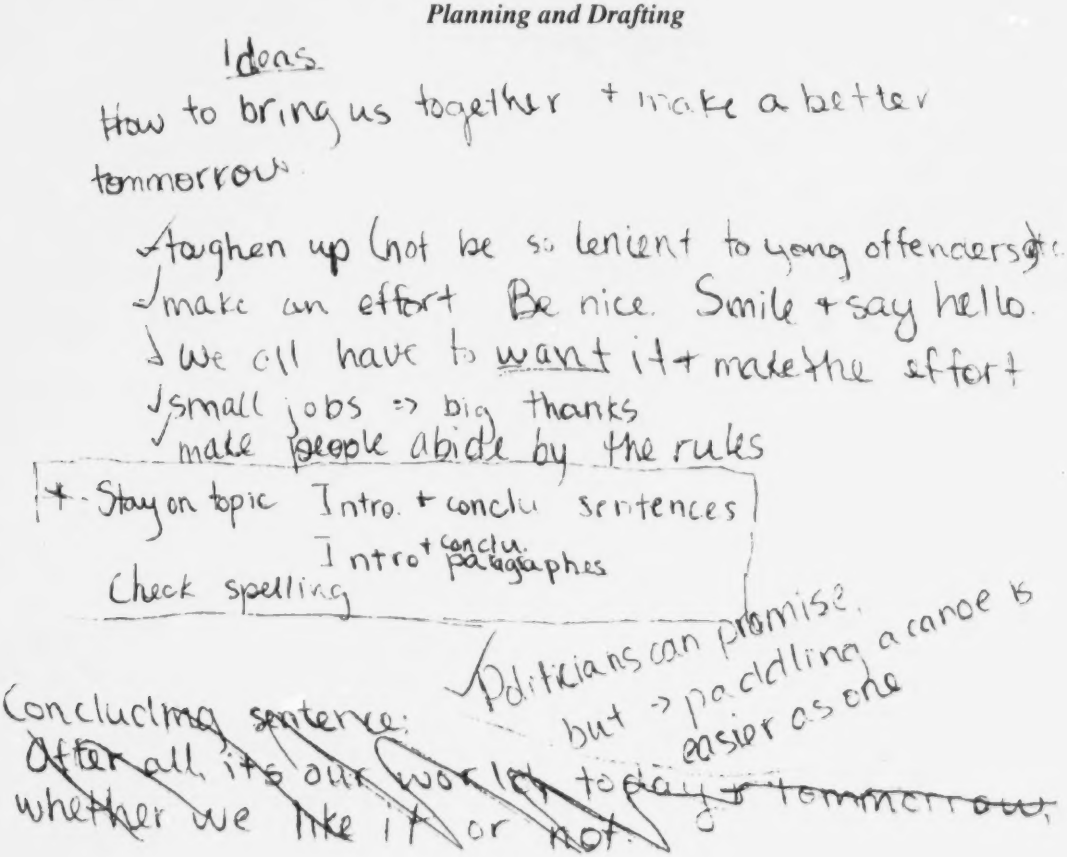
world, and whether they are lying or not, it's always easier and faster to reach the other end of the lake if everyone is paddling together."

Planning and Drafting

Listing general ideas that are related to the focus, "How to bring us together and make a better tommorrow," and framing a concluding sentence are the planning strategies used by the writer of this paper. Aware of the need to organize the ideas in a logical manner, the writer noted some factors that needed to be considered when organizing the list of ideas.

When revising the first draft, the writer added and changed sentences, phrases, and words in an attempt to communicate more clearly the purpose of the paper. For example, the writer added the sentence, "The choice is ours," which is significant to the theme, as it is written in bold letters in the revised copy.

Planning and Drafting


Ideas
How to bring us together + make a better tommorrow
toughen up (not be so lenient to young offenders) etc.
make an effort Be nice. Smile + say hello.
we all have to want it + make the effort
small jobs => big thanks
make people abide by the rules
+ Stay on topic Intro. + conclu sentences
Intro + conclu paragraphes
Check spelling
Politicians can promise.
but -> paddling a canoe is easier as one
Concluding sentence:
After all, it's our world today + tommorrow,
whether we like it or not.

ROUGH DRAFT (1)

Revised Work

IT'S OUR WORLD, TODAY + TOMMORROW

by

Reporter for the Edmont Sun

Alot of people seem to think that we have no choice but to live in this world of crime, death, pollution and gloom. The choice is ours. I don't see how we can expect things to change, if we, all the people as one, dont do something about all the problems we face of today and tommorrow. In last weeks paper, we asked you to tell us how you feel, and give us some ideas as to how we can make a better tommorrow. If not for us, then for those to come. Here are some of your opinions.

One woman from Medicine Hat, Alberta ~~the~~ wrote to us & said: "It's nice that some people want to do things to correct our past mistakes. But, while maybe one tenth of the population is trying to help, what are the rest of us doing? If we want to change things, we all have to want the ~~[illegible]~~ changes and we all have to make the effort."

"It would be alot easier if I could walk the streets of my city feeling safe. At my age, I barely get out and when the ~~[illegible]~~ thought of leaving my own home is intimidating, thats pretty bad." says an elderly man from Fort St. John, British Columbia.

A student taking courses at the Red Deer College has this to say "Criminals of today arent afraid to 'do the time'. We dont make it hard enough on them, they don't feel threatened. And, alot of the time we don't even punish some criminals. For example, alot of people beat their spouses and don't get anything for it Or if they do, ~~they mostly get a maximum of ten years in jail~~ But alot of the time, they get a two year sentence. If all they have to do is two years, why not do the crime again, they can handle two more. Besides, they seem to think jail isn't all that bad.

A college proffessor tells us, "When I go home to visit my parents, its not always a pretty sight. They live in a neighborhood where there are alot of gang fights, robberies and shootings I keep trying to convince them to move, but they say that all I have to do is learn to ignore all the fighting + see the nice things people do instead. So I went for a walk outside - found my mother was right Sometimes all you need to do is approach the streets with a smile and then you see that there are things other than the fights, robberies

and shootings. There is good, if you look for it, but we should have to look." "I'm only 14 years old, but I know that every little bit helps. I live in a small community with a lot of older people. Sometimes it brightens my day just to have done something nice for someone who might have had difficulty doing it. Not many people my age feel the same way + that really frustrates me."

If those are the opinions of some people, young + old, then obviously some of us are headed in the same direction. As for my opinion, the way I see it is, the politicians may promise us a better world, and whether they are lying or not, it's always quicker to reach the other end of the lake if everyone is paddling together. ■

Revised Work

It's Our World, Today and Tommorrow

by a reporter for the Edmonton Sun.

Alot of people seem to think that we have no choice but to live in this world of crime, death, pollution and gloom. **The choice is ours.** I don't see how we can expect things to change if we, all the people as one, don't do something about all the problems of today and tommorrow. In last weeks paper we asked you to tell us how you feel and to give us some ideas as to how we can make a better tommorrow. If not for us, then for those to come. Here are some of your opinions.

One woman from Medicine Hat, Alberta wrote to us and said, "It's nice that some people want to do things to correct our past mistakes. But, while maybe one tenth of the population is trying to help, what are the rest of us doing? If we want to change things, we all have to want the changes and we all have to make the effort."

"It would be alot easier if I could walk

cont. pg. 11

the streets of my city feeling safe. At my age, I barely get out and when the thought of leaving my own home is intimidating, that's pretty bad." Says an elderly man from Fort Saint John, British Columbia.

A student taking courses at the Red Deer College has this to say "Criminals of today aren't afraid to 'do the time.' We don't make it hard enough on them, they don't feel threatened. Alot of the time we don't even punish somecriminals. For example, alot of people beat their spouses and don't get anything for it. Or if they do, alot of the time, they get a two year sentence. If all they have to do is two years, why not do the crime again, they can handle two more. Besides, criminals seem to think jail isn't all that bad."

A college professor tells us, "When I go home to visit my parents, it's not always a pretty sight. They live in a neighborhood where there are alot of gang fights, robberies and shootings. I keep trying to convince them to move, but they say

cont. pg 13

that all I have to do is learn to ignore all the fighting and see the nice things people do instead. So I went for a walk outside and found my parents were right. Sometimes all you need to do is approach the streets with a smile and then you see that there are things other than the fights, robberies and shootings. There is good if you look for it, but we shouldn't have to look."

"I'm only fourteen years old, but I know that every little bit helps. I live in a small community with a lot of older people. Sometimes it brightens my day just to have done something nice for someone who might have had difficulty doing it. Not many people my age feel the same way and that really frustrates me."

If these are the opinions of some people, young and old, then obviously some of us are headed in the same direction. As for my opinion, the way I see it is, the politicians may promise us a better world, and whether they are lying or not, it's

cont. pg 15

Revised Work

always easier and faster to reach the other end of the lake if everyone is paddling together. ■

Meets the Standard of Excellence (5)

Student Sample G

This paper captivates and holds readers' interest through the use of imaginative details and a smooth flow of events.

Content

The writer establishes the purpose of the story in the initial exchange between Simon and Ted by presenting the setting, the characters, and their motives. Throughout the paper, the writer's use of language and choice of details to elaborate on the key ideas work well together to sustain this purpose.

The ideas and details are precise and creative. They are carefully chosen for their emotional effect and for the images they evoke (e.g., the stereotyping of Ted and his family, the Jamaican accent in the dialogue, and the imaginative description of how the brawl started: "with all the ferocity three eight year old boys could muster").

Organization

The introduction is purposeful and interesting, as the lively dialogue in the opening paragraphs gets readers involved and establishes the focus.

Subsequent events flow naturally from the initial situation, as the writer effectively uses transitions to present a new setting from which a solution to the conflict can be drawn. In addition, background information is revealed about the characters, so that the events lead to a powerful conclusion that reinforces the story's theme and ties events together.

Sentence Structure

Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled.

The writer plays with words and word order to evoke emotional responses from readers. For example, in the following sentence, the writer emphasizes the unusual nature of the procession and links this situation to the brawl that had been introduced in the opening by describing it in this way: "A wide eye persession of one pleased school teacher, two amazed boys, and one confident boy suffled down the packed avenue."

Sentence type and length are varied for effect. For example, the writer uses a sentence fragment, "Ted," followed by the simple sentence, "Ted was completely overloaded."

Vocabulary

The writer confidently uses a rich vocabulary to achieve the purpose of the story. Specific words and expressions are carefully selected with an awareness of connotative effect. For example, readers know what Mrs. Mackensie was thinking when she "allowed herself an ironic smile." In addition, colourful images are created when the writer describes the fight as "black blurring with white."

The writer's voice is appropriate and clearly heard through the use of specific language and precise details.

Conventions

The paper is essentially free from errors in punctuation and grammar.

The writer takes risks in spelling unfamiliar words (e.g., "percession" and "repremanded"). Familiar words are generally spelled correctly, though some errors are present. While the paper is lengthy and uses complex language and ideas, the presence of these errors moves the paper into the lower end of the 5 category.

Planning and Drafting

The writer completed a first draft of the story and made minor revisions, as indicated by carets with inserted words and phrases. These revisions were incorporated into the final copy.

In addition, the writer made further revisions when completing the final copy.

When spelling unfamiliar words, the writer wrote the words with an optional spelling and then chose one to use in the final draft.

fight
event
revision

Story:
multicultural events:

"Come on you wimp, he's one of those little immigrants!" A buck toothed white kid yelled. "His parents are trying to take our parents jobs!" He pushed the squanny kid. "Make fun of him, simon, make him run away!!

"No" Simon stood his ground, beneath the rusty yellow web of playground toys. "He's just like us, only his skin is different, he wants a better life here!"

"Fine." the boy shouted and he pushed past Simon and knocked the jamacan boy in the chest.

"Go away immigrant my dad doesn't like you!"

"Get ou' of ére" Simons friend said calmly, his accent magnfied

"No" and the boy hit him again "We hate your

Then suddenly, with all the ferocity of three eight yearold boys can muster, a brawl started.

The two boys rolled in the dusty gravel, black blurring with white until a supervisor notice and a teacher came like in a flash.

elementary fights they were pulled

apart and" Sent to the principles office.

"Welcom to carafest '94" The loudspeaker blared in its customary thick jamacian acent. Crowds thronged the streets, steel drums played, dazz customs paraded and exoctic smells filled the air as a wide eye persesion of one serious yet pleased school teachers and one confident twice amazed boys shuffled down the avenue.

"Are you having Fun persesion boys" The teache, Mrs. Mackensie, blurted to the repremande. students. "I think it was a great idea for our principle to sent you to a multi-cultural event culture91 you can all learn more about Pins," She patted his head, and he smiled

Pin was strutting through the cola of the event with an "this is mine" and "I told you so" look on his face. Every onee and a while he would look

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back at Simon and the ugly faced boy, Ted, and say " see!" Simon was enjoying himself yet he was startled at the sheer content of culture. They ~~had~~ already watched the bands, eaten great food, and tried on customs and yet the street continued on. ~~He had no idea the jamaican culture was so great and he wanted to see more.~~ He never thought Pins' life was so interessting, he was just looking out for a guy in need. Ted, Ted was completely overloaded. He was ~~poor~~ the kind of kid who lived in a trailer park, ~~and~~ ate Araft diner. His dad was a red neck construction worker and his mom watched TV. He had a boring biased life. He had grown up hating other cultures and colours and had never had a problem with it, until now. Right now, He was being exsposed to another way of life

Full force and the beggining ignorant
kid in that hurts.' Every thing was shattered
in Teds head as he looked around.
He had tried to resist it and say it was
dumb but then he say the neh juggling flaming sticks
too much cool stuff. Finally he to there was dismiss
said "This is neat" and jumped after the largest internal struggle
to join pin. at the front of the school boy could have
line, He Threwing away all his prejudice.
The Mrs. Mackensie allowed herself
an bitter smile. ironic smile. If
only adult minds were as open to others.
the acceptance of other cultures and colours.

Revised Work

Opened Minds

"Come on you wimp, he's one of those little immigrants!" A large buck-toothed white kid yelled at a slightly skinnyer white kid. "His parents are trying to take my Dad's job!" He pushed the skinny kid. "make fun of him Simon, make him run away!"

"No!" Simon stood his ground, his Jamaican friend sullen at his side, under the rusty yellow playground toys. "He's just like us, only his skin is different, he wants a good life."

"Fine!" the boy shouted and pushed past Simon, knocking the Jamaican boy in the chest. "Go away immigrant, my dad dosn't like your kind."

"Go, get ou' of 'ere" Simon's friend said calmly, his accent strong.

"No," the boy hit him again. "We hate you." Then, with all the ferocity three eight year old boys could muster, a brawl started. The three kids

rolled in the dusty gravel, black blurring with white, until a teacher came. Like in all elementary fights they were pulled apart and sent to the Principles Office.

"Welcom' to Carfest '94." the loudspeaker sang in a thick Jamaican accent. Crowds thronged the streets, steel drums rang, dazzling costumes paraded and exotic smells filled the cool air on a breezy summer day. A wide eye persession of one pleased school teacher, two amazed boys, and one confident boy suffled down the packed avenue. "Are you having fun boys?" the teacher, Mrs. Mackensie, blurted to the repremanded students. "I think it was a great idea for our principle to send you to a multicultural event. You can all learn so much more about Pin's culture!" She gave up trying to talk over the noise and patted

Pin's head. He smiled and looked up. Pin was strutting through the colour and sound with a "this is mine!" and a "I told you so" look on his face. Every once in a while he would look back at Simon and the ugly boy, Ted, and say something. He was happy they could learn about his home, Jamaica.

Simon was enjoying himself yet he was startled at the sheer content of culture. They had already watched the bands, eaten weird food, and tried on costumes yet the street continued on. He never thought Pin's life was so interesting, he was just looking out for a guy in need.

Ted. Ted was completely overloaded. He was the kind of kid who lived in a trailer park and ate Kraft Diner. He was a bully whose Dad was a redneck construction worker bully. His Mom watched TV. He had grown up hating other cultures because

they weren't his. He never had a problem with it, until now. Right now he was being exposed to another culture full force, and for an ignorant elementary student that hurts, in the beginning. He had tried to resist it and say it was dumb but then he saw the juggling men and he couldn't. There was too much cool stuff to dismiss. Finally he said, "This is cool" and jumped up to join Pin. He had overcome one of the larger internal struggles a school boy could have, throwing away prejudice.

Mrs. Mackensie allowed herself an ironic smile. If only adult minds were as open to the acceptance of other cultures and colors.

Meets the Standard of Excellence (5)

Student Sample H

This paper captivates readers' interest through the careful selection of details and the smooth development of the theme.

Content

The purpose is clearly established and sustained as the writer describes, through examples, the issue that will be addressed in the letter, as well as his or her emotional response to the issue.

Ideas are precise and creative. Details, including the wording of the title, are carefully chosen to show readers the emotions and thoughts of someone who is the target of racism, and to establish and develop the purpose of the paper. For example, the writer makes readers aware of everyday instances of racism that occur, through the following observation: "it's getting on an elevator full of people, only to find that a mere two seconds later, it is empty. Somehow, the floor I get off always seems to be the floor everyone has to get on." Through the description of specific experiences and the narrator's emotional responses to them, racism is made real to readers.

Organization

The introduction clearly establishes both the writer's stance and the focus for the paper.

The writer arranges ideas in a purposeful order, developing the theme by presenting specific interactions where racism is evident, then explaining that the similarities among humans make racism unnecessary. The final paragraph flows from previously stated ideas and underscores the writer's purpose for the letter.

Transitions are used effectively so that readers can readily follow the flow of ideas. For example, the sentence, "It's the little things that get to me," is used to introduce the narrator's personal experiences.

Sentence Structure

Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. A variety of sentence types and lengths are used to emphasize and develop the purpose of the letter. For example, parallel sentence structures emphasize the narrator's despair in the following: "It's the sound of teenagers . . . ," "It's going into a store . . . ," "But worst of all, it's getting on an elevator . . ." In addition, the sentence fragment, "Or we can try," understates the writer's purpose, with the effect of emphasizing the writer's stance.

Vocabulary

The writer selects specific language to evoke desired responses to the racial incidents that are presented. For example, by using the expression, "a mere two seconds later," the writer emphasizes the pervasion of racism in everyday life. In addition, the writer shows an awareness of the connotative effect of general words and expressions. For example, though general language is used in the following sentence, images are created because the words describe a specific event: "It's going into a store and being asked to leave because 'there isn't anything in here that you'll like.'"

The writer's voice is clearly heard through the thoughtful descriptions and emotion-laden responses to everyday instances of racism.

Conventions

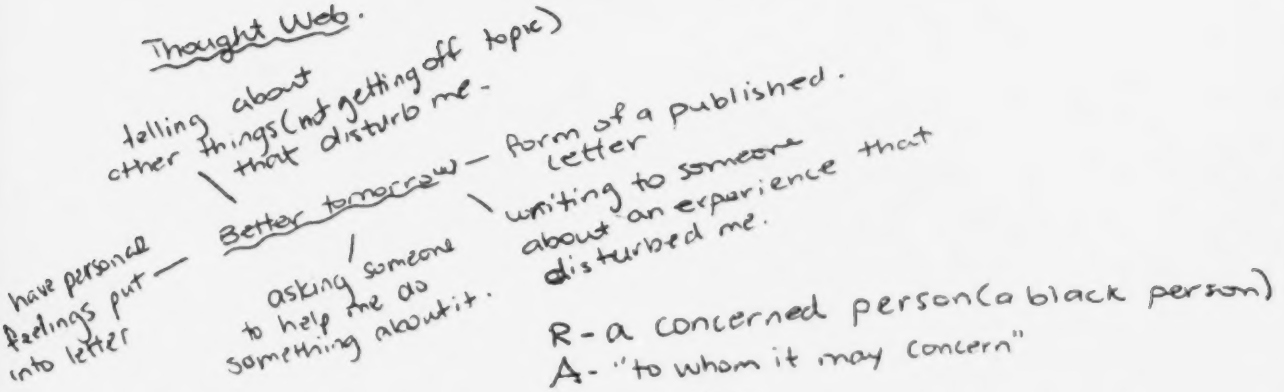
The paper is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Though the writer has not taken great risks in spelling unfamiliar words, he or she has attended to spelling when editing the final copy, changing

the spellings of "nationalities" and "considering" to conventional spellings. In addition, the writer has used complex sentence structures appropriately to achieve the purpose of the paper.

Planning and Drafting

The writer thoughtfully planned the paper through the use of a "Thought Web," the RAFTS planning strategy, and through generating possible titles and beginning and concluding sentences. As a result, the writer has a strong sense of the *role* of the narrator, as well as an awareness of the kinds of information that the *audience* wants in the letter. In addition, having determined in the "Thought Web" that the intended purpose is best achieved through telling, asking, and describing feelings and experiences, the writer decides that a letter *format* will best achieve the communication of ideas relating to the chosen *topic*.

Before writing the final copy, the writer revises the initial draft by changing words and expressions in order to communicate the purpose more clearly and precisely. Showing an awareness of the ongoing nature of the writing process, the writer makes further revisions on the final copy in an effort to enhance the communication of the purpose.


Thought Web.
telling about other things (not getting off topic)
that disturb me -
Better tomorrow
have personal feelings put into letter
asking someone to help me do something about it.
form of a published letter
writing to someone about an experience that disturbed me.
R - a concerned person (a black person)
A - "to whom it may concern"
F - a letter
T - social and racial justice
S -
The New York Times. June 1/94

To whom it may concern.

There are times when I feel I can't walk out of my front door without hearing some form of racial slurs or insults. I am afraid to show my face, in knowing that everyone will stare and laugh.

I feel so hurt, especially when I realize that people have come to better understand different races and nationalities. It's hard to imagin what things were like before, concidering how bad things are now.

It's the little things that get to me. It's the sound of teenagers calling "hey nigger" as I turn my back on them to walk up a flight of stairs.

It's going into a store and being asked to

leave because "there isn't anything in here that you'll like."

But ~~went~~ worst of all, it's getting on an elevator full of people, only to find that a mere 2 seconds later, it is empty. Somehow, the floor I get off always seems to be the floor everone has to get on.

I don't know how much longer I can put up with the feeling of hatred cast towards ~~[illegible]~~ every ~~[illegible]~~ African-american society, as well as ~~[illegible]~~ every other culture. ~~and Polish people~~ - ~~[illegible]~~ Something has to be done.

People have to realize that no matter what color our skin is, no matter what we wear on our heads or around our necks, we are all the same. No matter how different we look, we all have feelings. We all cry, when we're sad, and all laugh. when we're happy, It's the same laughter that everyone experiences.

No one can understand the pain and suffering we all go through when we look out the window only to have rocks thrown at our faces by 7 year old children whose parents have taught them that it was the right thing to do.

It's not the right thing to do. We have to stop and think before the next time

we laugh or make fun. Stop and think, and put yourself in the shoes of that person, and maybe, then, we can all live as one.

~~[illegible]~~.
"Thoughts From a Window".

Titles.

1) Thoughts From a Window
2) Crying out against crying.
3) Who's right is it?
4) If you prick us, do we not bleed?

Concluding Sentances

1) Stop and think, and put yourself in the shoes of that person, ~~and~~ Instead of laughing, shake hands with them and maybe then, we can all live as one.
2) Or we can try.

Beginning Sentances

1) Some days I don't even bother getting out of bed for I feel I cant walk. . . . .
2) There are no words to describe the pain we all go through.

Thoughts From A Window.

The New York Times.
June 1 1994.

To Whom it may concern:

Some days I don't even bother getting out of bed for I feel I can't walk out of my front door without hearing some form of racial slur or insult. I am afraid to show my face, in knowing that everyone will stare and laugh.

I feel so hurt, especially when I realize that people have come to better understand different races and ~~nationalities~~ nationalities. It's hard to imagin what things were like before, ~~considering~~ considering how bad things are now.

It's the little things that get to me. It's the sound of teenagers calling "hey nigger" as I turn my back on them to walk up a flight of stairs. It's going into a store and being asked to

leave because "there isn't ~~anything~~ anything in here that you'll like." But worst of all, it's getting on an elevator full of people, only to find that a mere two seconds later, it is empty. Somehow, the floor I get off always seems to be the floor everyone has to get on.

I don't know how much longer I can put up with the feeling of hatred cast towards every member of the African-American society, as well as every other culture. Something has to be done.

People have to realize that no matter what color our skin is, no matter what we wear on our heads or around our necks, we are all the same. We all cry when we are sad. When we're happy, we all laugh and it's the same laughter that everyone experiences.

No one can understand the pain and suffering we all go through when we look out ~~the~~ a window, only to have rocks thrown at our faces by seven year old children

[redacted]
whos parents have taught them that
was the right thing to do.

It's <u>not</u> the right thing to do.
We have to stop and think before the
next time we laugh or make fun.
Stop and think, and put yourself in
the shoes of that person. Instead
of laughing, shake hands with them,
and maybe then, we can all live as
one. Or we can try.

"Thoughts from a Window".

English as a Second Language

Student Sample I

The writer's use of language and sentence structure is much less sophisticated than the ideas that are communicated. The writer evidently has difficulty using English to express ideas.

Content

It appears that the writer intended to convince readers that a better tomorrow is possible for Albertans. This purpose is addressed on a superficial level, as ideas from Tim Feehan's song are presented with few details to support them. In addition, some details, such as the information about being "a busineses people in the country," do not relate clearly to the writer's argument.

Organization

The writer introduces Tim Feehan and the topic of his song in the paper's opening, rather than establishing a purpose for the paper.

Ideas are arranged haphazardly, though the writer attempts to connect ideas by relating them to the song. It is frustrating for readers to follow the writer's argument when sentences such as the following include such a diversity of information: "And the people have to make this country growth up and this song tell we have to make this Alberta turn to be a better place."

Some ideas, such as that of working hard and having a better future, are repeated.

The final sentence refers to "this city," though the rest of the paper speaks of Alberta and a "strong country." As a result, the ending does not provide closure to the paper.

Sentence Structure

The writer's struggle in putting words together using the grammar of the English language is evident throughout the paper. Incorrect verb tenses and pronouns are used in sentences such as, "He's make up this story," and "we keeping work very hard."

Vocabulary

Though the writer uses words in different contexts than native English speakers would, the meaning intended by the writer is fairly clear, as shown by the following sentence: "And I think the people will make the dream come truth, and this will happen to our future."

General words, such as "stuff" and "people," are used. It appears that the writer attempted to use a limited vocabulary to the fullest by listing ideas and by repeating ideas using sentences that are constructed in different ways. For example, the idea of not working is stated, "their alots people lost their job or they can't get any job," then repeated as a question and a response, "do you know why the can't get their job. Because they don't want to work," and then repeated as a question, "And some day they will think why don't we go to work."

The writer's voice is hidden behind the use of general language. However, the great effort that the writer has made to communicate ideas, in spite of an unfamiliarity with English grammar and vocabulary, does give readers a sense of who the writer is.

Conventions

Because the writer uses many words repeatedly, there are few spelling errors. Taking a risk in spelling the word "busineses," the writer's approximation of the conventional spelling shows that the writer has seen the written word,

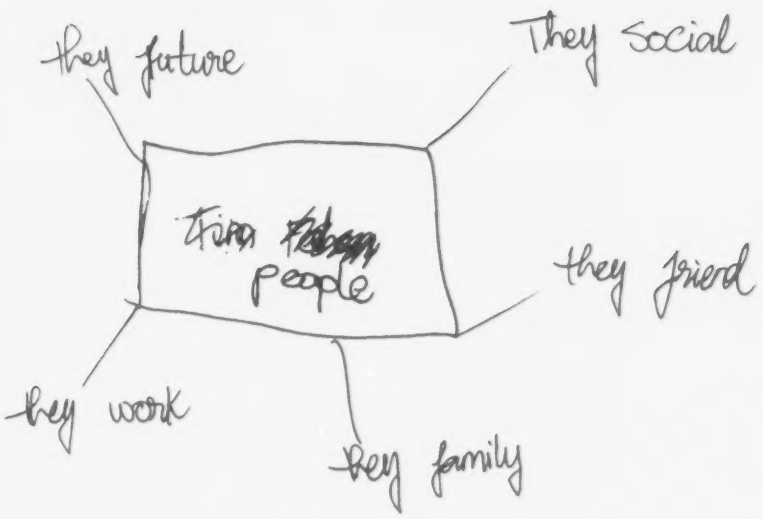
but may have difficulty pronouncing the ending and, thus, may not hear the correct final sounds.

The writer's great difficulties with English grammar present accompanying problems in the use of conventional punctuation. As a result, the clarity of communication is reduced.

Planning and Drafting

A webbing strategy is used to generate ideas. By using the general term "people" at the centre of the web, the writer has made it difficult to provide a focus for the paper. As a result, the planning strategy does not provide much direction for the writing of the paper.

Planning and Drafting



Tim Feehan is a former Edmontonian. This man I think want to tell the he is a special person. He 's make up this story. Because he want ~~[illegible]~~ to know what will happen to our future all this song said is about people sharing their feeling to their friend of they family. And the people have to make this country growth up and this song tell we have to make this Alberta turn to be a better place for you and for people. And we keeping work very hard we be a Lasinese's people in the country, and we also keep our country to be a strong country in the world. If the people try to understand. We one better hard is hard. And I think the people will make the dream come truth, and this will happen to our future.

right now in ~~Alberta~~ ~~their~~ dots people lost their job or they can't get any job do you know why the can't get their job. Because they don't want to work. just like some example all the stuff price go up, and the people their don't have many to by their food or they can't get what they want and their dots people live on the street or some people ~~dot~~ steeling stuff from another people. And some ~~day~~ day they will think why don't we go to work. To get what ~~the~~ we want. And ~~I also~~ also want to said is I hope this city will be a richer city in the country

Exceptional Papers

A large number of Grade 9 students who wrote the 1994 English Language Arts Achievement Test demonstrated outstanding abilities in expressing their thoughts and ideas through writing. Their papers exceeded the standard of excellence in all scoring categories.

The two responses that follow are representative of the many exceptional papers that were written by Grade 9 students.

Student Sample J

Readers of this persuasive argument are struck by the writer's confident and skillful use of language to express a point of view. Sophisticated vocabulary, such as "renounced" and "insurmountable," is smoothly and effortlessly woven into the essay, clearly communicating the writer's ideas and views. In addition, the writer selects words and expressions that carry many ripples of meaning beyond their literal meaning. For example, when the writer identifies Canada's multicultural society as "' colourful,'" it is evident that the writer is playing with multiple meanings of the word.

The way in which words and ideas are combined also contributes to the effectiveness of the argument, as the writer uses a variety of sentence structures in order to emphasize certain ideas. For example, when talking of immigrants to Canada, the writer asks two questions: "Why did they come?" and "What was their goal?" These questions also serve as creative transitions between ideas, as the writer goes on to answer them in the next part of the paper. In addition, to emphasize ideas, the writer repeats certain structures, such as, "They dreamed of a new beginning. They dreamed of freedom and democracy. They dreamed of Canada."

Ideas are well developed, as the writer draws on extensive background knowledge about early immigration to Canada and about issues in contemporary life. The writer's argument is supported with specific information, and strengthened by passionate and eloquent assertions such as, "We are all the children of that dream. We are all brothers and sisters of their hope. We must not allow that hope to die." The writer's argument is further enhanced through vivid images that are created using expressions and sentences such as, "Can our leaders not see the countless bodies of the dead, washing ashore on the beaches of Lake Victoria?"

The writer organizes ideas by showing how the hopes of early Canadians are connected with the problems faced by contemporary Canadians. The theme, "diversity, as Canadians, is what makes us strong," is stated in various forms throughout the paper.

Commas are used liberally throughout the paper. However, the absence of mechanical errors is impressive when considering the sophisticated use of language and sentence structure, and the length of the paper.

P I : introduction
- multiculturalism is good
- we are strong
- problems
- we can solve

P II : History
- why they came
- feelings
- hardship
- pride

P VI : Racism
- why
- all the same

P IV : War
- Rwanda
- D-day?
- preventable

P V : Poverty
- hunger (famine)
- death
- Africa - Somalia Ethiopia

P III Crime
- causes
- punishments
help
help, offer
society

P Conclusion
- one flood, many colors
- future
- pride + prosperity

P VII ~~Segregation~~
Segregation

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Our country is one of the proudest and harmonious democracies on Earth. We live in a strong, free nation of pacifism and mercy. Our multicultural society is one of great diversity. This is what makes our nation so "colourful." Although our advantages are many and our national pride glows from our faces, we confront tremendous adversity in our future, as Canadians. Huge problems hover over our society, not only in Canada, but around the world. Crime terrifies our communities; wars rage abroad; poverty and famine engulf the Third World; racism tears away our human bonds; separatism looms ahead. These dilemmas may seem insurmountable, but if we hold on to one another, continue to dream, and open our hearts we will find a better tomorrow.

After the turn of the century, our land greeted an enormous influx of

immigrants. They crossed the ocean from England, Ireland, Scotland and France; from Scandinavia, Germany, Russia, and the Ukraine. Why did they come? What was their goal? Many of the immigrants experienced incredible hardship in their homelands. Their religions were censured, their beliefs and hopes were almost crushed. They were persecuted and ostracized from their homes. One thing kept them alive, giving them the courage to persevere; their dreams. They dreamed of a new beginning. They dreamed of freedom and democracy. They dreamed of Canada. Those brave people built our country and molded the face of a nation. It was with pride and determination, and with blood and sweat, that they carved out their dream into reality. We are all the children of that dream. We are

all brothers and sisters of their hope. We must not allow that hope to die.

Today, our society is faced with an increasing crime rate and the difficulty of finding a solution. People are afraid for themselves and for their loved ones. Vicious murders, rapes, and robberies headline our newspapers and strike fear into our hearts. We not only need stricter sentences and laws, but we need to rehabilitate these criminals back into human beings, capable of living responsibly in society. Capital punishment should never again be used in our country. It is barbaric, cruel, and uncivilized. We must treat these criminals in a harsh manner, but at the same time, teach them right from wrong and how to be law-abiding, accountable citizens.

War is the greatest tragedy of the human race. There are so many possible, peaceful solutions to our global differences, that war is a totally unnecessary, inhuman act. Have we not learned our lesson? Was the second World War not enough proof that we must never allow it to happen again? The preventable suffering and death of people is immeasurable. We, as a member of the United Nations, cannot continue to stand by idly, as the people of other countries slaughter each other, unmercifully. The warfare in Rwanda is an example of our costly hesitance to end conflict. Can our leaders not see the countless bodies of the dead, washing ashore on the beaches of Lake Victoria? If we do not find ways of living together, in peace, then I pray for the future of the human race. The

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millions of suffering people of the world look to us for aid and deliverance. Can we not hear their cries of pain? Can we not see their empty eyes, pleading for mercy? We must hold out our hands to them, for they are our innocent siblings in a world of hate.

In Canada, racism has become the greatest barrier between us. It breaks our chain of love and pride, each link becoming separated from the next. Why can we not accept our differences and treat each other as equals? Beneath our skin, in our hearts, we are all the same. We dream the same dreams; we feel the same feelings; we cry the same tears. If we cut two men of differing race, do they not bleed the same red blood? Do they not cringe in the same pain? Are they not brothers, at heart? We must end racism, before

our human chain breaks apart - forever.

The future is what we make it. We can end these problems through determination and our love for each other. There is no barrier we cannot overcome, nor is there a mountain we cannot climb. Our diversity, as Coradiance, is what makes us strong, and is what will give us courage in the coming millennium. Let us stand proud and let us sing out our love of our nation. Our one heart will continue to pump the pride and prosperity through the veins of our country, forever.

Student Sample K

The vivid images created in this letter bring readers both visually and emotionally to the Bosnian setting. When reading descriptions such as "Carnage was strewn all over the streets, twisted into unrecognizable, nearly grotesque forms," readers cannot picture the scene without also feeling the "overwhelming sense of grief" expressed by the writer.

By writing from the perspective of a sensitive United Nations worker, the writer has selected a point of view that allows him/her to describe the situation using specific language that conveys a feeling of horror and, at the same time, a sense of understanding of the changes that are needed to bring about a better way of life for all involved. The writer's voice is clearly heard through the UN worker's graphic observations, using emotion-laden expressions such as "Soldiers just stepped over them, faceless killing machines who showed no mercy for fellow human beings of another religion."

By addressing Martin, asking him questions or requesting him to "imagine the difference it could have made . . . ," the writer maintains the conversational style of an informal letter throughout the paper.

Drawing on a wealth of background knowledge, the writer reflects on the underlying conflicts that have created the Bosnian situation and suggests possible approaches for moderating the effects of these conflicts. The depth of the writer's understanding of the situation is evident in the well-developed argument for "bind[ing] ourselves together if we are to be unbroken by the destructive forces of human nature." Going beyond a literal understanding of the conflicts and issues, the writer skillfully uses the fruit basket and twig metaphors to extend and underscore the theme.

The writer's purpose is clearly communicated by developing one conflict very thoroughly and then showing how a celebration of diversity is needed to resolve present and future conflicts.

Ideas flow smoothly throughout the paper because the writer uses transitional statements such as "The immediate problem of the war and ethnic cleansing of Muslims by Christians hides the bigger problem of a disconnected society and world." In addition, the writer skillfully combines ideas within a variety of complex, compound, and simple sentences in order to express ideas succinctly. For example, appositives such as the following are used effectively throughout the paper: "The town, once beautiful and bright, now lay in ruins with rubble and smoke everywhere, looking like death."

The writer's effectiveness in communicating ideas to readers is further enhanced by the absence of errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Apart from misspellings of the words "devastating" and "theirs," the writer has expressed complex ideas using sophisticated language and sentence structures, as well as appropriate writing conventions.

Planning and Drafting

~~Dialogue~~ Letter

- trip to Bosnia/Hertzigovinia
- rubble and fires, grey skies and smoke
- carnage strewn across the streets
- soldiers marching across the streets
- wailing from windows
- shots randomly ringing out
- war between Christians and Muslims

→ ethnic cleansing

- failure of UN peacekeepers
- scattered and weak hate is not strong
- together everyone could deal with things like drugs, violence & disobedience to the law
- human greed and want for power
- educate the ignorant about other cultures

→ children are brought up believing in what their parents do.

- give young people more exposure to new ideas and societies, before racist ideas are shaped in their minds

→ camps, school curriculum (like parts of the Gaza strip)

- provide government help for poor, to get people back on their feet and so they don't blame others for their downfalls.

There is additional space for Planning and Drafting on pages 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

- the system has to change
→ more government programs to help more people get through uni.
→ more successful society.

- a basket filled with one fruit is dull and uninviting but with a mix of colorful fruits it becomes more interesting
- "sticks in a bundle ~~cannot be broken~~ are unbreakable"
twigs can be snapped

January 31st, 1994.

Dear Martin:

From the moment my peacekeeping plane began its descent to our ruined base in northern Bosnia/Hertzigovinia, I could see the devestating situation created by man. The town, once beautiful and bright, now lay in ruins with rubble and smoke everywhere, looking like death.

As we got closer to the ground and finally landed, the scene grew worse and worse. I felt an overwhelming sense of grief while I watched a naked child run across the colorless street calling, "Mama, Mama, Na...", and fall down abruptly with blood running down his face — he'd been shot. Carnage was strewn all over the streets, twisted into unrecognizable, nearly grotesque forms. Soldiers just stepped over them, faceless killing machines who showed no mercy for fellow human beings of another religion.

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From the surrounding bleak, winterland, the occasional shot rang out and a distant scream could be heard. Those brave enough to venture outside in search of firewood, wore blank expressions, as though death had become part of their daily routines. There was no running water, no electricity, no food, and no peace in any of the cities I visited over a one week span.

Our UN vans and medical signs no longer provide hope to a people who has lost everything. We, not just as a country but as a human race, have failed terribly in our duty to love one another. How, my friend, did the world ever get to be this way? Every religion believes that God is on their side of the war. Do churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples, are people not taught to love everybody? Or is it only everybody who follows their faith? Parents raise their children to believe in what they feel is the right thing, be it racism against all other races or acceptance to all people. Children

raise their children in the same manner, sometimes judging a people before they know a thing besides the color of their skin or the shape of their religious pendants. There lies our problem, Martin — in ignorance. People who are afraid of change become very protective of the style of life that they live. They become so wrapped up in it that they box themselves in so tightly that they can no longer see any other way of life and wish to destroy all but their's.

The immediate problem of the war and ethnic cleansing of Muslims by Christians hides the bigger problem of a disconnected society and world. Sending people with guns over here is not the solution. We must, everywhere we possibly can, educate the ignorant about other cultures to help them stay open-minded. Schools, homes, businesses, and governments must reach out to the young people especially and help mold them into caring, worldly adults instead of "local" bigots. Children must have much more exposure to

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different societies, through things as simple sounding as summer camps. Imagine the difference it could have made for all young soldiers here to have made a friend of the opposite religion as a youngster. Would they be as hateful? I think not.

The system has got to change, Martin. If nothing is to change our mentally segregated society, we will all eventually self destruct. Don't get me wrong — I know that this is a big task, but it can be done if we all work together. The world could be so much safer, stronger, and beautiful. Countries would be able to focus on social programs like grants for more university students or welfare that gets people back on their feet, instead of becoming a way of life. Societies would have a more successful outlook if they could operate with all members of it. Without blind hate or the problem of war, everyone would have a better chance to live life to the fullest.

Think of a country as a basket and people as fruit. They are all different shapes and colors and flavors, but all the same they are fruit. If a countries draws its strengths from the same fruit over and over again, there is no room for change and life soon becomes quite dull. But with a variety — the basket becomes colorful and inviting, interesting and diverse.

Twigs can be snapped easily, but as an African proverb says, "Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable." We are the twigs, Martin, and we must bind ourselves together if we are to be unbroken by the destructive forces of human nature.

Your sincere comrade and friend,

Developmental Issues

When students are learning to write, they gradually develop confidence and competence in their abilities to cope with increasingly complex tasks. Each student's developmental pattern is unique, yet certain commonalities may be observed as they attempt to gain control over various elements of composition. In the Grade 9 papers, students took risks with their writing and experimented with a variety of writing techniques. Through their writing, the Grade 9 students demonstrated the various stages of their writing development. As illustrated in the samples presented in this document, some students demonstrated mastery of more complex elements of composition while others showed varying degrees of success in controlling more basic elements.

Teachers can help students by becoming aware of their fledgling attempts to incorporate new features into their writing. These attempts need to be supported and encouraged. They can also be viewed as opportunities for teachers to instruct students within a meaningful context.

Patterns observed in the writing processes undertaken by students, in their expression and organization of ideas and in their use of language, are presented in the following discussion.

The Writing Process: Planning

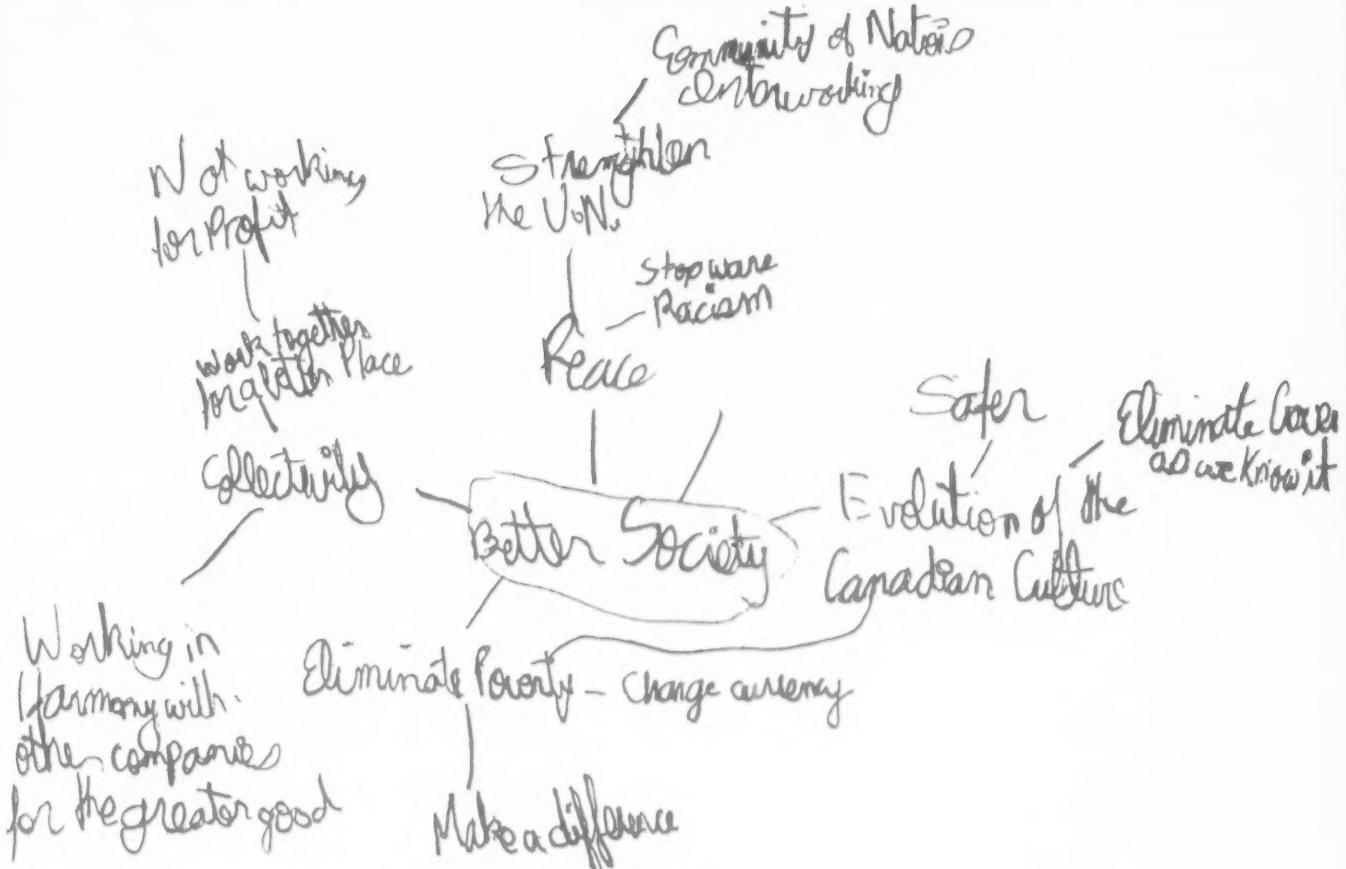
Demonstrating a recognition of the important role that planning plays in generating ideas and organizing their writing, students used a number of strategies with varying degrees of success. The strategies were particularly helpful when used to narrow the focus for the paper and to highlight the connections between ideas.

As illustrated in the following examples, webbing and outlining strategies proved to be helpful for generating and organizing ideas. In addition, the RAFTT strategy helped to provide direction for the writing, focusing students on the role, audience, format, tone, and topic for their writing.

Planning and Drafting

R-(role)- is that of someone writing about our society.
A-(audience) - newspaper readers
F-(format)- editorial
T-(tone) - serious but yet optimistic & persuasive
T-(topic)- ideas for a better ~~tomorrow~~ tomorrow.

Focus- Write about somethings we can do to make the world a better place & bring us together.



There is additional space for Planning and Drafting on pages 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

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The Writing Process: Revision

Many students revised their first drafts by adding, substituting, and deleting ideas, expressions, and words. Their revisions show an awareness of the important role revision plays in enhancing the clarity of communication.

In the following example, the writer used a number of strategies for revising the writing: marking the places where ideas from the bottom of the page need to be added, crossing out unnecessary words and ideas that do not enhance the expression of ideas, replacing words with ones that more precisely express the intended ideas, and editing errors in the use of writing conventions.

Planning and Drafting

I was a child with ~~many~~ hopes and dreams. As I grew up in the streets of Chicago I learned to be my own guide. → What starts as a walk through your own ~~neighborhood~~ neighborhood can turn into a tradegy. Add 1 The only way I knew how to keep ~~myself~~ out of trouble was to go straight to school in the ~~morning~~ morning and shoot around at the basketball courts afterschool. Add 2

For years all I did was attend school and play basketball. All the years of fear finally paid off when I was chosen to play basketball in high school. I finally had a structure in my life. Through basketball I learned responsibility and respect. When I ~~graduate~~ would graduate I ~~come~~ would come out of high school with top honors in academics and sports. ~~I was proud when the University of North Carolina offered me a basketball scholarship.~~ change 1

Unfortunately the rest of the kids ~~did~~ my neighborhood didn't have the same chances as I did. Before many reach the age of ten they are sucked into drugs and crime. I watched these kids grow up faster than they should. More than half of them learn to shoot a gun before they are eight years old. In ~~eficnce~~ reality there are no children in my neighborhood because they have too much responsibilities to be children.

I knew something had to be done, but I wasn't exactly sure how to accomplish the task. I spent nights dreaming about it and soon an answer came to me.

Add 1 I've seen people and I have seen friends of mine get killed for ~~being~~ no reason at all.

Add 2 I had to remember that silence was the key. Just keep on going was my motto. Fear kept me alive.

change 1 I would accept a basketball scholarship to North Carolina

Expressing and Organizing Ideas: Focusing

While students were successful in linking global issues and events to a central theme, many found it difficult to focus on one issue or event and develop it fully. Rather than providing specific examples and perspectives on one issue, students addressed a number of issues superficially, listing them catalogue fashion.

The following sample illustrates the difficulties students showed in focusing on one issue.

We could start by teaching our children at a young age that just because some people have a different color of skin, doesn't mean that you or they are superior or imperior of each other you are EQUAL. We should be creating jobs not laying people off. In foreign countries compromises should be made. How hard could it be? Teenagers that kill, steal, rob, kidnap, rape should suffer consequence of equal value to adult convictions. I think in Canada we should have the death penalty, because it is costing us (taxpayers) to keep them fed, housed, clothed.

Expressing and Organizing Ideas: Awareness of Format Characteristics

Students showed their awareness of the characteristic style, tone, and voice of the writing formats they selected. For example, many students who selected the diary/journal format used a conversational, relaxed style, tone, and voice, while those who selected an editorial format used a more formal style, tone, and voice.

Those who chose the story format followed the expected story structure, including an opening, events, and a conclusion.

The following examples illustrate students' awareness of the characteristics of diary and editorial formats.

March 22

Dear Diary,

Why must this go on? A soldier has brought James home but critically injured. My mother and I were joyful that he was alive but she still almost died herself when she saw James was injured. This war has gone on long enough! But how can I make a stand? I am only a small young girl in the middle of a large war of hate!

There will always be wars. It is inevitable. There is always going to be a conflict over territory or other dispute that needs to be settled, but these disputes do not have to be settled violently. These skirmishes, these clashes, they can all be settled with words. Language is more powerful of a weapon than any gun, any knife, any bomb. Anybody can kill someone instantly with a gun, but with words, it's different. Firing a gun is a mindless activity but words take thought. Words have meaning and the right combination of them can bring about a more horrible fate than any gunshot blast to the back of the head.

Expressing and Organizing Ideas: Strong Introductions

The introductory paragraph was used by most students to present an issue and to give views on the issue. In this way, the openings effectively provide a focus for the writing, as shown in the following example, where the writer asserts his/her beliefs and invites readers to read further to find out more about these views.

Dear Reader,

I may be just one person, one Canadian, one who has too improbable of a dream for this province, this country, this world. I may be just a dreamer, an idealist, a utopian who would like to see changes happen, all for the greater good. I am just one voice, one blade of grass on the field, but I am not alone. There are other dreamers, just like me. People who believe they can make a difference. My friend, believe me, they can. Suddenly that voice of evolution becomes a chorus no one can ignore, no group can deny, no God can stop. My dear reader, here is my song, my song of hope, change, peace, and evolution.

Expressing and Organizing Ideas: Awareness of Global Issues

Students demonstrated their background knowledge of global issues through their writing. As shown in the following example, students drew on literature, news reports from newspapers or other media, movies, and personal experiences to illustrate their ideas.

I heard on the news today that there ~~has~~ has been another attack on the Tutsi tribe by the Hutus in Rwanda. Ten babies were hacked to death with machetes. Why do we let it happen?! I read an article in the paper the other day about how Rwanda and Somalia couldn't possibly be making all their own arms, and therefore industrialised countries like the U.S. and Canada must be supplying them! Imagine that! Canadian peacekeepers are possibly being shot with Canadian guns! If we really want to stop the killing, why don't we just stop supplying the guns?

Use of Language: Precise Vocabulary and Colourful Images

Students confidently used a rich vocabulary to create colourful images and to convey their ideas precisely. The sophistication in students' use of language indicates that they are encountering new vocabulary in literature and other media, and that they feel comfortable in taking risks to incorporate new vocabulary in their writing.

The following passages exemplify the strong and precise vocabulary that students used in their writing.

His hair hung in dark greasy strings, and the rain drops were making tiny rivulets through the dirt on his face. His clothes were layers of tatters and grime and he stared unseeingly into space, his hands clasped shakily on his lap.

I looked away and entered the

We constantly speak of living in a philanthropic, humane society, yet we are always contriving new ways to kill each other.

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Use of Language: Combining Ideas When Constructing Sentences

While some students skillfully combine ideas in creative and effective ways, using appositives and clauses, many students appear to have limited strategies for combining ideas in sentences. They often placed ideas side by side, using commas and conjunctions. As a result, some of their sentences were awkwardly constructed and included unnecessary words. For example, in the following sentence, the pronoun "I" is repeated unnecessarily: "I was so tired and all I could think about was the warm bed and the hot coffee waiting for me when I got home." One possible way to get rid of the "I" is to use the appositive, "Tired, all I could think about . . ." Another way is to use the prepositional phrase "at home" in place of "when I got home."

Use of Language: Plural and Possessive Nouns

A number of students confused possessive nouns with plural nouns, using apostrophes incorrectly in their writing. As illustrated in the following examples, it appears that some students either do not understand the functions of plural and possessive nouns or that they are unsure of the use of the apostrophe: "If you put two baby's in a room together, they will eventually begin to play" and "A community with many culture's, religions, and faces."

Appendix

Scoring Guide

Reporting Category: Content

When marking **Content** appropriate for Grade Level 9 writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writer

- establishes a purpose
- chooses ideas
- supports the response
- considers the reader

Meets the Standard of Excellence **5**	• The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is clearly established and sustained. • The ideas used by the writer are carefully chosen and perceptive. • Supporting details are precise and often creative. • Such writing captivates and holds the reader's interest, and may be lively and/or imaginative.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence **4**	• The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is clearly established and generally sustained. • The ideas used by the writer are thoughtful. • Supporting details are relevant and specific. • Such writing engages and holds the reader's interest.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard **3**	• The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is established but may not be sustained. • The ideas chosen by the writer are appropriate but conventional. • Supporting details are relevant but general. • Such writing generally holds the reader's interest.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard **2**	• The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is vaguely established and may not be sustained. • The ideas chosen by the writer are superficial. • Supporting details are scant and/or vague and/or irrelevant. • Such writing does not hold the reader's interest.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard **1**	• The writer's purpose may be unclear; if a purpose is stated or implied, it is not sustained. • The ideas chosen by the writer are inappropriate. • Supporting details are irrelevant, inappropriate, and/or lacking. • Such writing is confusing and/or frustrating for the reader.
INS INSUFFICIENT	• The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess the content.

Note: Content and Organization are weighted to be worth twice as much as the other categories.

Reporting Category: Organization

When marking **Organization** appropriate for Grade Level 9 writing, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- focus
- coherent order
- connections between events and/or details
- closure

Meets the Standard of Excellence **5**	• The introduction is purposeful and interesting, and it clearly establishes an appropriate focus that is sustained throughout. • Events and/or details are arranged in a purposeful and effective order, and coherence is maintained. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, effectively connect events and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • Closure is evident and purposeful.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence **4**	• The introduction is purposeful and clearly establishes an appropriate focus that is generally maintained throughout. • Events and/or details are arranged in a purposeful order, and coherence is generally maintained. • Transitions, either explicit or implicit, appropriately connect events and/or details within sentences and between paragraphs. • Closure is related to the focus.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard **3**	• The introduction is functional and establishes a focus that may be inconsistently maintained. • Events and/or details are arranged in a discernible order, although coherence may falter occasionally. • Transitions may be missing either within sentences and/or between paragraphs. • Closure is mechanical and/or artificial.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard **2**	• The introduction may lack purpose and/or may not be functional; any focus established by the writer may not be maintained. • The arrangement of events and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently. • Transitions, within sentences and/or between paragraphs, are lacking or may be inappropriate. • Closure may be unrelated to the focus.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard **1**	• The introduction, if present, is not functional or is inappropriate; no focus is established. • The arrangement of events and/or details is haphazard and incoherent. • Transitions are rarely used within sentences or between paragraphs. • Closure is inappropriate, unconnected, or missing.
INS INSUFFICIENT	• The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**.

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Reporting Category: Sentence Structure

When marking **Sentence Structure** appropriate for Grade Level 9 writing, the marker should consider

- the degree to which the writer frames grammatically correct sentences
- the effectiveness and variety of sentence type and length

Meets the Standard of Excellence **5**	• Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. • Sentence type and length are effective and varied.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence **4**	• Sentence structure is controlled. • Sentence type and length are usually effective and varied.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard **3**	• Sentence structure is generally controlled. • Sentence type and length are sometimes effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if present, may occasionally impede meaning.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard **2**	• Sentence structure is sometimes lacking control. • Sentence type and length are rarely effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if present, often impede meaning.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard **1**	• Sentence structure is generally lacking control. • There is no deliberate variation of sentence type or length; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if present, severely impede meaning.
INS INSUFFICIENT	• The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**.

Reporting Category: Vocabulary

When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for Grade Level 9 writing, the marker should consider

- the effectiveness of the words and expressions selected by the writer
- the accuracy of the words and expressions selected by the writer
- the appropriateness and effectiveness of the writer's voice/tone

Meets the Standard of Excellence **5**	• Specific words and expressions are carefully selected with an awareness of connotative effect. • Words are used accurately and deliberately to fulfill the purpose. • The writer's voice/tone are confident, appropriate, and enhance the meaning.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence **4**	• Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection and some awareness of connotative effect. • Words are used accurately and often effectively. • The writer's voice/tone are clear and appropriate.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard **3**	• General words and expressions are sometimes used when specific words would have been more effective. • Words are generally used accurately. • The writer's voice/tone are discernible but may be inconsistent or uneven.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard **2**	• General, rather than specific, words predominate. • Specific words, if present, are frequently misused. • The writer's voice/tone are not clearly established or are inappropriate.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard **1**	• General words that convey only vague meanings are used. • The writer's voice/tone are not evident.
INS INSUFFICIENT	• The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content.**

Reporting Category: Conventions

When marking **Conventions** appropriate for Grade Level 9 writing, the marker should consider

- the extent to which the writer has control of mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.) and grammar (agreement of subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent; pronoun reference; etc.)
- clarity of the communication

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered

Meets the Standard of Excellence **5**	• The writing is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. • The relative absence of error is impressive considering the complexity of the response.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence **4**	• The writing may have minor errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. • Any errors that are present do not reduce the clarity of the communication.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard **3**	• The writing may have occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. • Errors that are present seldom reduce the clarity of the communication.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard **2**	• The writing has frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. • Many of these errors reduce the clarity of communication.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard **1**	• The writing has numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar that are both noticeable and jarring. • These errors severely reduce the clarity of communication.
INS INSUFFICIENT	• The writing has been awarded an INS for **Content**.